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PICTURES

OF

RUSSIA AND ITS PEOPLES.

THE EMPRESS OF RUSSIA.

MADRAS:

THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY.

S. P. C. K. PRESS, VEPERY.

1893.

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Note.—Most of the pictures in the following pages are taken from Russian Pictures, Drawn with Pen and Pencil, by Thomas Michell, c.b. Price 8s. Published by the Religious Tract Society. This is a beautiful volume, strongly recommended.

PICTURES

OF

RUSSIA AND ITS PEOPLES.

SITUATION AND EXTENT.

Next to England, of all other countries in the world, Russia possesses the greatest interest to the people of India. Should British rule ever terminate, of which there is no prospect at present, the probability is that Russia would make a strenuous effort to conquer this country. It is desirable, therefore, to know the present condition of Russia and how it is governed, so that the effects of its rule may be anticipated. Those who complain of the present administration of India would find the truth of the proverb, "Out of the smoke, into the fire."

The Russian Empire includes the whole of Northern Asia and the eastern half of Europe. It contains 86 lakhs of square miles—about one-seventh of the land surface of the globe. In 1887 the population amounted to 113 millions. It is the second empire in the world in extent and the third in population. Including Protectorates, the British Empire contains about 115 lakhs of square miles with 379 millions of inhabitants*—more than thrice the population of the Russian Empire.

The Russian Empire is divided into two great portions—Russia in Europe and Russia in Asia. The former contains about 2 millions of square miles, and is about one-third larger than India. The population is about 95 millions. Asiatic Russia contains about 6 millions of square miles—four times the size of India,—but its population is only about 18 millions.

Each great division will be described in turn.

EUROPEAN RUSSIA.

Physical Features.

Boundaries.—European Russia is bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the east by the Ural Mountains, the Ural River, and the Caspian; on the south by the Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea; on the west by Austria, Prussia, the Baltic Sea, and Sweden.

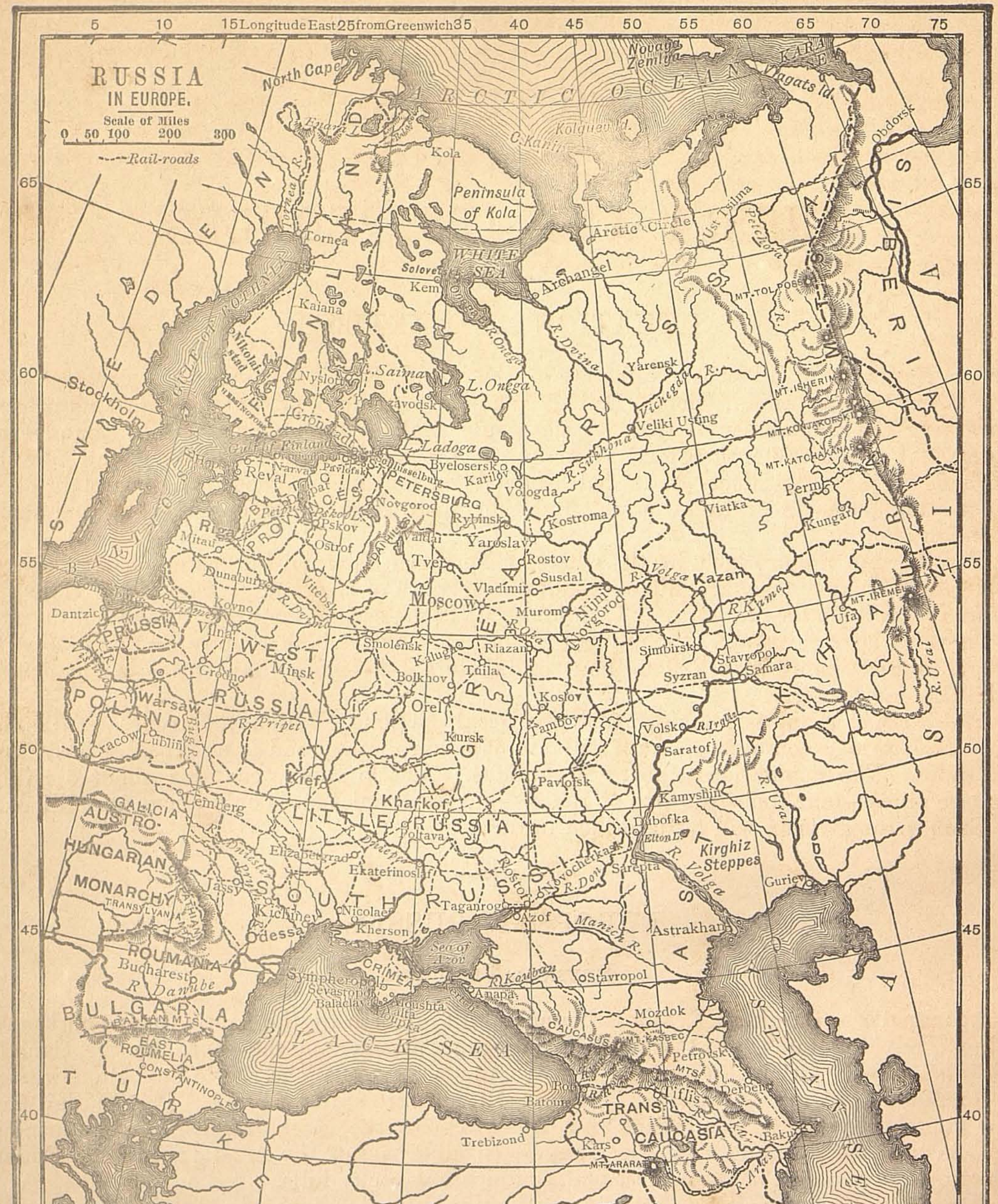
Surface.—The greater part of European Russia forms a vast plain. The Valdai Hills, a low range between St. Petersburg and Moscow, form the chief watershed. The principal mountains are the Ural and Caucasus Ranges, forming part of the Asiatic frontier. Finland, to the north of the gulf of the same name, contains low rocky hills.

Rivers.—The rivers to the north of the Valdai Hills flow into the Arctic Ocean or into the Baltic; those to the south fall into the Caspian or Black Seas. The sources of the Russian rivers being only slightly elevated, their currents are very slow, and thus well adapted, for navigation; but most of them are frozen several months a year. The largest rivers, both to the north and south, generally rise near each other, and are connected by canals. There is therefore uninterrupted water communication between the Caspian, the Black Sea, and the Baltic. St. Petersburg is now the chief port of the Volga in the south, the largest river in Europe.

Lakes.—Russia has numerous lakes in the north-west. Ladoga, one of them, is the largest in Europe. There are salt lakes in the south-east.

Climate.—The southern parts are generally warm; the northern, cold; but there are great extremes of temperature. In the Arctic region the ground is permanently frozen a few

* Statesman's Year Book for 1892, p. xxx.



feet below the surface, and the seasons consist of one long cloudy summer-day, and one long winter night, relieved by clear moon light, and bright clouds flashing through the sky, called the *aurora borealis,* or northern light. In the centre and north the winters are long and severe, while the summers are short and the heat excessive. In the south, on the contrary, the hot season is long and the cold season short.

In winter the faces of people are not seen in the streets as all are muffled up in furs afraid of losing nose or ears, by the frost. If they get frozen they are in danger of

being lost, when they become warm again. When the nose freezes, it becomes white and hard. A person feels no pain and does not know it. Any kind person passing by will call out, "Little father, mind your nose." Then the man will take up some snow and rub his nose till it gets warm, and thus it is saved. A man was once carried, with frozen feet, from his sledge into a hut. When the foot was tapped with a walking stick, a sound was heard as if it had been marble. The eyes, too, give trouble, for the lids freeze together. When this is the case a person gropes his way to the first house, and asks to allow him a place for a few moments near the stove, when the ice melts.

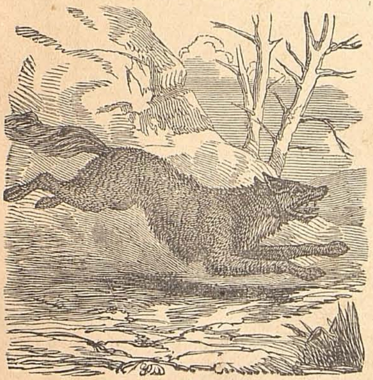
In extreme cold persons have a great desire to sleep. They wish to lie down, but if they do so, they never wake again. Many people thus lose their lives every year.

Flesh can be preserved for any length of time in a frozen state. Fowls, after having their feathers plucked, are dipped in water, and left to freeze. Frozen geese may be seen in the markets with outstretched necks so straight and stiff, that they can be lifted by them.

The rainfall is small, varying from 14 inches in the east to about 25 inches in the west. Part of it falls in the form of snow. Winter storms often bury the railways under snow, and are very destructive to cattle.

Soil and Vegetation.—The country bordering on the Arctic Ocean consists of marshy plains, covered with snow a great part of the year. Trees will not grow; but there are mosses, lichens, shrubs, and a few flowering plants. A large portion of Northern and Middle Russia is covered with forests. Trees are so numerous in some parts that it is said a squirrel might travel from St. Petersburg to Moscow, a distance of 400 miles, without touching the ground. In the south-east there are sandy treeless plains, called *steppes*. The south-west and centre are fertile. Oats, barley, and especially rye, are cultivated towards the north; wheat is grown in the south-west; flax and hemp are produced in the west.

Animals.—The reindeer, which affords food, and clothing, and the means of travelling to the Laplanders, is found in the north. Sheep, oxen, and horses are reared in great numbers in the south. Camels are common in the south-east. Hares become white during winter which prevents them from being easily seen in the snow; though in summer they are brown. Bears and wolves are the principal beasts of prey. Bears live in the forests and are not often seen. Wolves like to live near villages. A single wolf will not dare to attack a man, but it will carry off a child straying alone. Sometimes wolves attack dogs. A pack of wolves will come into a village. When the dogs pursue them, they run away, till they have led the dogs far into the forest: then they suddenly turn round, catch and devour the poor barking animals.



A WOLF.

Russians regard pigeons as an emblem of the Holy Spirit. They consider it a great sin to kill them. They buy these birds merely to feed them, and to amuse themselves by watching their flight. The shopkeepers, by waving rags fastened to a long stick, direct them where they are to fly. The Russians also keep large numbers of birds in cages. During winter those exposed to the air have no water given to them as it would at once freeze into ice. Their little bottle is filled with snow, which they melt with their bills. When the sun has melted the ice even a little, birds may be seen eagerly drinking the water.

Bees are kept in great numbers. In many districts honey is largely used instead of sugar. The sturgeon fisheries in the large rivers are important. The roe of the sturgeon, when pickled, is called *caviare*, of which the Russians are very fond.

PEOPLES.

Russia is inhabited by many nationalities; but the Russians Proper, who will now be described, are by far the most numerous and important. They are divided into the Great Russians, occupying Central Russia, and numbering over 35 millions; the Little Russians, about 15 millions, in the south-west; and the White Russians, about 4 millions, in the Western Provinces.

Europe is chiefly peopled by three great races—the Latins, including Italians, French and Spaniards, in the south-west; the Teutons, including Germans, English, Swedes, &c., in the centre, and the Slavonians, including the Russians, Poles, &c., towards the east.

The Slavonians belong to the Aryan race. They are supposed by some to have entered Europe by a more northerly route than the other Aryans. There are scattered fragments of them in different parts of Central Europe. So many of them were enslaved by the Germans at an early period, that the word *slave* is derived from them, as *dasa* from the Dasyus, enslaved in Ancient India. There are no nations now of pure Slavonic blood. The Mongol Tartars for two centuries held a great part of the country, and partly intermarried with the Russians. Hence there is a proverb, "Scratch a Russian, and you find a Tartar." Other intermarriages took place with the Germans and Swedes. The Slavonians form a sort of transition between the Eastern and Western Aryans.

Appearance and Dress.

The Russians, in general, are somewhat dark, with small deep set eyes, a short nose, a bushy beard, and of middle size. Some allow their hair to grow so long that it looks

A RUSSIAN PEASANT COLLECTING MONEY FOR A CHURCH.

like a mane down their backs. Others wear it clipped straight round by a barber who, when a customer goes to him, places an iron top on the head, and then cuts off the hair which stick out beyond the rim. Poor Russians pay no attention to their hair, which is generally tangled; but the hair and beards of the town priests are carefully combed and smoothed.

The dress usually consists of a cap, drawn down almost to the eyes, a long loose dark great coat, hanging down to the heels, and heavy boots up to the knees into which the trousers

are tucked. In winter poor people wear cloaks made of sheep skin with the wool inside. Wealthy men have rich fur cloaks and fur caps. Some gentlemen dress as in other parts of Europe; soldiers, who are numerous, wear the military uniform.

A RUSSIAN GIRL.

Dress varies according to the season. In winter thick furs are worn; in hot weather, thin dresses. During the day the clothing may be light, whereas in the evening all have warm dresses.

In the country poor people often weave their own cloth, and dye it blue. Those who cannot afford boots, bind strips of rag round their legs and feet, and fasten them with a string. Over the rag they wear shoes made of thin strips of bark plaited.

In summer the women dress in light coloured cotton. In winter they wear sheep skin like the men.

Food and Drink.

The peasants live chiefly upon dark brown bread, made of rye. Along with this, a soup, made of cabbage and a little flour, is taken hot. A kind of wheat, soaked and boiled, is eaten with a little fat. Mushrooms, curds, and onions are other articles of food. Dried mushrooms are sold in the markets in strings.

The rich are as fond of cabbage soup as the poor, but for them it is prepared differently. Barley, butter, and mutton, cut into small pieces, are added, and when the whole is dished, three table-spoonfuls of thick cream are poured over it. Cabbage soup forms a standing dish at breakfast, dinner, and supper. Some of the Russian fish-soups are excellent.

As the seasons consist of a very hot summer and a very hot winter, dishes vary accordingly. Religion also has an influence. Saturday has different dishes from Sunday; and Wednesday and Friday, as fast days, differ again in this respect from Monday and Thursday.

Bread is of different shapes. Sometimes it is ring-shaped, so that it may be strung upon a cord, or carried like bracelets upon the arm.

The Russians are very fond of fish pies, baked in oil. They use large quantities of ice. They drink not only ice-water, ice-beer, but even ice-tea, throwing a lump into a cup. Families, except the very poorest, have ice-cellars. The ice on the Neva is sometimes 3 cubits in thickness. It is taken away in large blocks and sold.

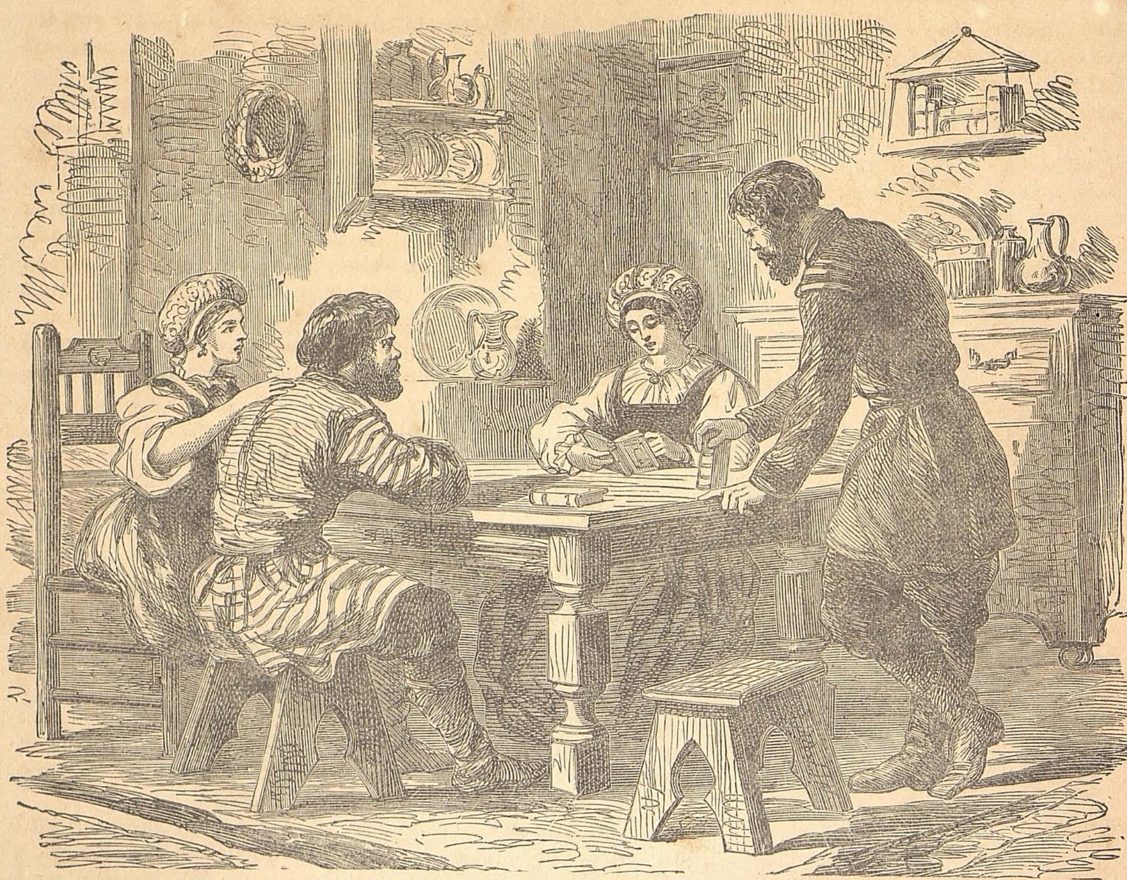
In the cities some of the rich live very luxuriously. In the country the rains sometimes fail, as in India, and there is great distress. At such times and even constantly in some parts, *famine* bread is used. Along with the grain, husks, and even bark are mixed. It has a gritty taste as if it were a mineral. The black bread often contains sand. In eating it, the upper teeth are not allowed to touch those of the lower jaw, so that the grating of the sand between the teeth is avoided.

The use of tobacco is universal in Russia. Both sexes use it. Ladies in travelling will pull out a little cigarette case, and ask a light from the first male stranger they meet.

Tea is largely used. The best is sent from China in the form of bricks, from which a little is cut off. Water is kept constantly hot in a kind of large tea urn, called samovar. In the middle of it there is a little charcoal fire. The tea-pot is sometimes placed on the top of it.

Kwas, a kind of light beer, is the favourite drink of the Russian. He can no more live without it than fish without water. The ordinary Russian scarcely ever tastes water; he drinks nothing but kwas: it is mixed even with his cabbage soup. It is made from rye, fermented with some honey and salt.

The Russian peasant is also unhappily fond of a stronger drink, called *vodka*. It is a spirit like arrack; but distilled from rye. Not only does every wedding, funeral or other ceremony end in general drunkenness; but no purchase or any other business is concluded



A RUSSIAN FAMILY.

without vodka. To cheat the tax collector, they try to make him drunk. Drunkenness is scarcely considered a sin.

COTTAGE OF RUSSIAN PEASANT.

HOUSES.

The Emperor has some of the finest palaces in the world; but the people generally live in poor houses, made of logs, laid one on the top of the other. They are mostly of one story. The windows are very small. Every house has a large brick fire-place, which sometimes fills the inside of the house with smoke. As the top of it is warm,

A DOORKEEPER OR DURWAN.

it is the favourite sleeping place. There they lie wrapped in their dirty sheep skins. Babies are placed in a kind of cradle, which swings fastened to the end of a pole.

Most of the houses are built with their gable ends to the street. In the centre of the gable there is usually a window, opening on a small balcony. In the better class of houses, the framework of the window and the ends of the ridge of the roof, are often carved and painted in gaudy colours.

Most of the Russians have no idea of the importance of cleanliness. They think it a mere waste of time to clean their cottages. All kinds of filth are thrown outside, to be covered by snow in winter and washed away in spring by the flood of melted ice. Diseases are thus constantly occurring. The death rate is nearly double what it is in western countries.

In towns the streets are often straight and wide, but badly kept with large ruts. The shops do not contain much, and the articles are not tastefully arranged. Cows and horses graze in the main streets, and people who go out at night must have lanterns as the few oil lamps only confuse the eye.

Rich people have large houses, with numerous servants. They have often double windows and double doors to keep out the cold.

BATHS.

The Russian peasants do not undress when going to bed, but sleep in their sheep skins. They are cleansed somewhat by their weekly bath. Saturday afternoon is the great bathing day in order that they may be clean on Sunday. In cities, crowds may then be seen hurrying along, with towels under their arms, and birch-twigs in their hands. They do not bathe by going into the water or pouring it over them; they have vapour or steam baths. Large stones are heated in a fire. When they are taken out, water is poured on them, and the house is filled with steam. The people who bathe lie on benches, and become quite hot from the steam. The benches are of different heights, the higher the hotter. The bath servants beat the bathers with the birch-twigs dipped in cold water. One would suppose that he had got into a place of punishment, but the bathers are as happy as fish in the water. The heat is at first oppressive; but when the body perspires freely, the feeling is delightful. Afterwards cold water is thrown over them. In winter the bathers sometimes come out and roll in the snow. This would seem to be dangerous; but it does no harm to the Russians.

In cities there are bathing houses where people go in by paying a little copper money. The rich have their own baths. Peasants bathe by shutting the door and windows of their cottages, and pouring water on a hot stone, till they are filled with steam.

CHARACTER.

The many millions of Russians differ in character. The peasants and the city people are unlike in several respects; noblemen and officials also have peculiar qualities.

The ordinary Russian is a good, simple-minded person, of quiet dispositions, submitting, like the Hindu, to whatever Providence may have in store for him. He is a child, with a child's faults and some of a child's virtues.

The Russians are intensely national. Every Russian addresses his countryman as

"brother" or "thou," while a foreigner is "you." They are kind to each other, and have not the revengeful spirit displayed by some nations.

"Laziness," says a Russian, "is our national weakness, and the secret of all that is going wrong. None of us, from the highest to the lowest, likes to do anything that he can possibly avoid doing. We never do to-day what we can possibly put off till to-morrow. Go into the Government offices and see the clerks 'at work.' What are they doing? Some smoking cigarettes, others playing at cards; others, again gossipping; but no one works if he can avoid it. Anything for an easy life; that is our motto all round."

The Russians are apt learners, but they are prevented from attaining excellence by the constant excuse, "It is nothing." When some fault is pointed out, it is considered as a mere trifle.

Like the Hindus, the Russians are improvident and wanting in foresight. They spend freely what they have without thought of the morrow. Like the Hindus also, they are very hospitable. A guest is received with great kindness.

The Russians are very polite. The lowest day-labourer salutes his poorest cousin with politeness, takes off his hat three times to him, hastens towards him, shakes him by the hand, calls him brother, father, grandfather, bowing repeatedly. He inquires, with the kindest interest, how he does, and wishes him the blessing of heaven and the protection of all the saints, as he would a person of the first rank.

Peasants let their hair grow long, and if they have no hat, tie a piece of string round their heads to keep the hair out of their eyes when at work. When a peasant meets any one greater than himself, he generally takes this string off his head as if it were his hat. Russians take their hats quite off to a great man, and hold them in their hands as long as they see him; and he always takes his hat off in return. Even two coachmen take off their caps to each other.

"Pardon me! forgive me! excuse me!" says one beggar incessantly to another, pulling off at the same time his greasy cap. Instead of asking, "Were you lately at your brother's?" even a Russian peasant would say, "Were you pleased to be yesterday evening at your brother's?"

The Russians use affectionate diminutives very largely, as, my little dear, little mother, little friend, little dove, my little soul. They have also numerous abbreviations for names, which are used even in the imperial palace. It is somewhat the same in England. When Albert Prince of Wales was a boy, the Queen, his mother, called him "Bertie."

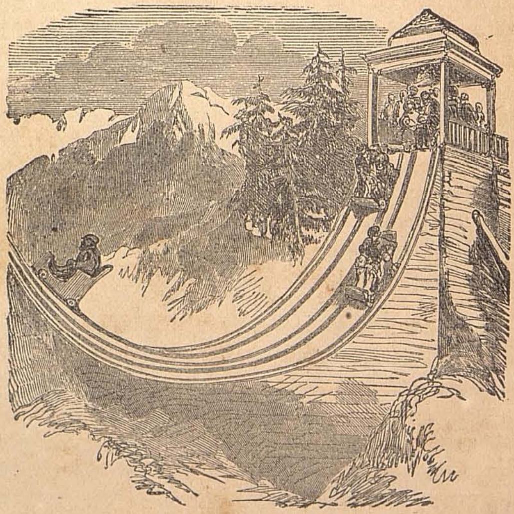
The good and bad qualities of a Russian servant are thus described:

"He never tires in your service. If he has worked for you all day, he will work for you all night if required. Nothing is too difficult for him to attempt. He is your right hand man in every case of need. He can mend your carriage or your harness, and repair your clothes or your boots. Give him a good axe and there is no carpenter's work which he cannot do; nay, if need be, he can build you a new house almost single-handed. He can shoot your game or do any plain cooking for you. If you order him to wake you at 4 o'clock in the morning, you may sleep soundly to the last moment, in full confidence that you will be called. He is honest if you trust him, but for all that, to earn a glass of vodka he will lie without shame, and commit a petty theft without remorse."

As in some other countries, it is not considered dishonest to cheat Government. The official classes are notorious for bribery and corruption.

Amusements.

Music, dancing, and gambling are the favourite amusements. Card-playing is so much a passion that 110 tons of cards have passed in one year over the railway from St. Petersburg to Moscow. Outdoor games are not so common as in England, but gymnastics are beginning to gain ground.



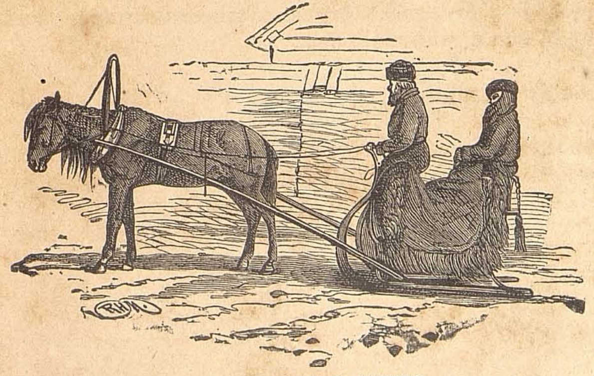
WINTER SLIDES.

In winter slides on ice hills are a delight. Two slopes are made facing each other, and are covered with smooth ice. One or two persons get into a sledge on the top of one of the slopes. When let go, it rushes down the one slope and up the other.

Swings are another favourite amusement. The Russians in general dislike active exercise.

Travelling.

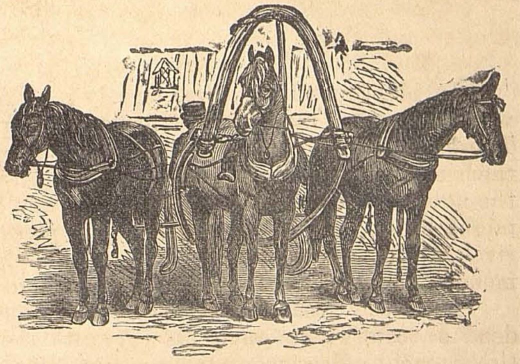
Travelling in Russia varies according to the season. In summer carriages have wheels; when snow covers the ground in winter, the wheels are taken off, and the carriage glides along as a sledge.



A COMMON WINTER SLEDGE.

The common winter sledges which people hire have often poor horses, yet some of them go very fast.

When people are going on a long journey or are using a heavy sledge, they have three horses. The middle horse is harnessed to the shafts; the two horses are loosely attached to him, one on each side. The middle horse has his head tightly fastened so that he must always hold it up, while the two side ones bend their necks out and keep their heads very low. Over the middle horse is what is called a *duga*, shaped somewhat like a horse shoe. It is used to connect the points of the shafts, for the middle horse has no traces. Underneath the highest part of the duga is fastened a bell, which may sometimes be heard more than a mile off. The driver has no seat, and has to stand all the time.



The driver has a whip, but he rarely uses it, and in general merely taps with the handle on the board in front of the sledge as a warning to the horse. He relies chiefly upon his voice. He talks to the horse as if it were a human being, now encouraging it by tender epithets, at another time scolding. He says, "My friend, my brother, my white pigeon, do stir thy legs! Well, what is the matter now? Art thou blind? Quick! quick! Mind, there's a stone? Dost see it? That's right. Well done! Keep to the right. What dost thou look round for?" If angry, the horse is a "cursed hound." It is difficult to say how far the horses understand all this, but somehow it has a powerful influence over them.

Most of the roads in Russia are mere tracks. The country is thinly peopled, and in many parts, as in Lower Bengal, it is almost impossible to get hard stone fit for road-making. Besides this, from the nature of the climate it is difficult to keep roads in repair.

Along the principal lines of roads where there are no railways, Government has post stations, from 10 to 20 miles apart, where horses and carriages are kept for the convenience of travellers. Application is made for the number of horses to be supplied.

Russia has about 33,500 miles of navigable rivers, and 453 miles of canal. Large quantities of grain, timber, and other bulky goods are floated down the rivers, and there are numerous steam vessels.

In 1890 there were about 19,000 miles of railway open in European Russia, against 16,000 in India. The number of passengers by the former was about 48 millions, against 114 millions by the latter.

Occupations.

The great bulk of the people are agricultural and live in the country. The town population is comparatively small. Russia is rich in minerals. It is estimated that 400,000 persons are employed in mining. Kerosene oil is obtained in large quantities, some of which

is now exported to India. Grain is the chief agricultural produce; flax and hemp are largely raised and exported. Timber is an important article of commerce. Brushes are often made from the bristles of Russian swine.

During winter, when the peasants are unable to work in the fields, many are employed in domestic manufactures. All sorts of articles are made, from the roughest to the finest articles of luxury. Since the Zemindars have given up, in many cases, living on their estates, these manufactures have declined from the want of a market.

In St. Petersburg, Moscow, and some other large towns, there are cotton and silk factories. About 850,000 are supposed to be thus engaged. Some of the working classes endure great hardship, and have to toil long hours for miserable pay.

Classes of the Population.

The three principal classes of the people are the Nobles, the Town people and the Peasants. Each will be described in turn. The clergy and soldiers will also be noticed separately. In 1875 they numbered as follows:

Nobles	1,027,254
Clergy	695,905
Town Population	7,196,005
Peasants	63,840,291
Military Classes	4,767,703
Foreigners	153,135
	77,680,293

But the different classes are not sharply distinguished.

Nobles.

In old times Russia was merely a collection of independent principalities. Each prince was surrounded by a body of armed men, partly large landed proprietors, partly of soldiers. These men formed the nobles of the time. When the Tartars conquered Russia, the princes themselves became subject to them. After the Grand Princes of Moscow became Czars, the nobles were still worse treated. They had to prostrate themselves before the Czar, they might be flogged or executed at his pleasure. Still, there were frequent quarrels among rival families about precedence. A whole family would consider itself disgraced if one of its members accepted a post lower than that to which he was entitled.

Peter the Great had no respect to nobility of birth; he paid no attention to the claims of dead ancestors; he gave his servants the pay and honour which their services merited. Government offices were thrown open to men of all ranks, and personal merit was the only claim to promotion. He also laid down the principle that all nobles should serve the State from boyhood to old age. After Peter's death, this system was relaxed, and official rank was coveted.

The children of nobles often learn to speak different languages. They have generally an English nurse, a French governess, and a German teacher. When they talk, they sometimes mix different languages together, so that it is difficult to understand what they mean.

From dividing landed property among children at the death of their parents, great estates are not perpetuated as in England. New men force their way up, whilst many of the old families are compelled to retire from the ranks of nobility. In Russia titled families are very numerous, and all the children bear the titles of their parents even while their parents are still alive. There are princes acting as coachmen, and plenty of counts and barons who are less honourably, and perhaps less profitably employed.

The Town Population.

In Russia, as in India, comparatively few people live in towns. One great cause is that the population is thin. There is plenty of land, and people who can support themselves by agriculture are not likely to collect in towns.

Another reason in former times was that in the country most persons were serfs, attached the land like slaves. Their masters lived on their estates, and taught some of them

to supply nearly everything they needed. In this way arose those domestic industries already mentioned.

Another cause which hindered the growth of towns was that the Czars imposed heavy taxes upon the townsmen, and treated them as their serfs. People began to flee from towns to escape oppression. Those who fled were brought back as runaways, and those who attempted flight a second time were ordered to be flogged and sent to Siberia.

Peter the Great tried to raise the towns to the same position they had in other parts of Europe. Foreign workmen were imported; foreign merchants were invited to trade with the Russians; a kind of municipal government was introduced.

RUSSIAN MERCHANTS.

The town population is composed mainly of three classes—the merchants, the artizans, and others.

The merchants rank first in dignity. Any one may become a merchant by having his name entered as such, and by paying the required dues. As soon as he ceases to pay these dues, he ceases to be a merchant in the legal sense, and returns to the class to which he previously belonged.

In former times even rich merchants were uneducated. Some of them spent large sums on splendid furniture, and squandered money freely, as in India, at marriages and deaths. The family, however, lived down stairs in small dirty rooms, poorly furnished. Merchants do not bear a good reputation for honesty.

In large towns each article has its row of shops. People are constantly asking, "Father, where is Cap Row?" "Brother, where is Boot Row?" "Mother, is this the way to Petticoat Row?"

Shopkeepers recommend their goods to passers-by in the most extravagant terms. "What are you looking for, sir? clothes—the very best, of the newest pattern. Boots—first-rate. What can I do for you? You will find everything here, if you will be pleased to step in."

A German traveller gives the following dialogue between a St. Petersburg shopkeeper and a gentleman wishing to buy a pair of boots:

"Oh, how shamefully this boot-maker has treated thee, daddy*! come to me; and will sell thee a pair, the best that can be made. I ask but 15 roubles. Upon my honour, I cannot abate a farthing."

"I will give thee half the money," says the gentleman.

"O daddy, daddy, thou wouldst not wrong me. Only look at this make; feel the leather, how soft, yet so strong! Thou wilt not live to wear them out. Nay, nay, be not so hasty. Don't go away, daddy. Thou shalt have them for 8 roubles; I cannot let them go for less. There, take them, and I'll pack them in nice paper for you. Fare thee well and God grant thee health to wear them!" Very often notwithstanding this praise, after rain, the boots soak up water like a sponge.

The shopkeepers often frankly confess their faults. One may say: "We Russians lie and cheat whenever we can, and make no scruple to do it. And so the Poles have a saying about us, 'He must be a cunning fellow who outwits a Russian.' 'Yes, the Poles are right; don't you think so, sir?' But, father, pray buy something of me, whatever thou wilt, be it even such a trifle, and I will lay thee any wager thou pleasest that thou shalt not leave my shop

* A familiar name for father.

without being taken in. Yes, yes; the Russians are cheats! He who is not imposed upon by a Russian must be a cunning fellow!"

The artisans form guilds, or associations, somewhat like those in India. Each trade has at the head of it an elder and two assistants, chosen by the members; and all the trades together form a council under an elected head and the elders of the different trades. All trade disputes are settled by the council. Peasants from the country are often enrolled for a time as members of these associations.

Besides the shoemakers who have workshops, there are others who go about mending boots and shoes.

The permanent residents in a town, neither merchants nor artisans, also have their own elder.

AN ITINERANT SHOEMAKER OR COBBLER.

Peasants.

These include all engaged in agriculture, forming nearly nine out of every ten of the entire population. They have passed through several changes. At an early period they were composed of three classes. Slaves, increased by prisoners of war and otherwise, were at the bottom of the scale. Next to them were free labourers, who could go where they pleased to find work. Above them were the small farmers who had land. By degrees the distinctions between these classes disappeared.

There was plenty of land in Russia, but it was valueless without cultivation. The landed proprietors or zemindars did therefore all in their power to retain the peasants on their estates. Those who accepted land had seldom cattle and the necessary implements. They had therefore to borrow from the landlord, and being in debt to them they could not leave.

When the country was under different princes, the peasants could run away when oppressed. After the rule of the Czar was established this was prevented. The zemindars had to pay certain taxes to government which they would be unable to do if the peasants left. Severe laws were past against peasants changing their abodes, and against those who received them. The zemindars by degrees exercised the same power over the peasants as in the case of their slaves, fining and flogging them at pleasure. Next they began to sell them without the land on which they were settled. This at first was illegal; but it was afterwards formally allowed by government. Peter the Great required a larger revenue to carry out his plans. Instead of the former land tax paid by the occupiers of land, he imposed a poll tax upon all. The zemindars had to pay the poll tax upon the serfs on their estates, as if they were slaves or cattle, which gave them the idea that they were part of their property. Serfs were bought, sold, and given as presents in hundreds and thousands, sometimes with the land, and sometimes without it, sometimes in families, and sometimes singly. The chief restriction was they could not be publicly sold by auction. It was customary to estimate the wealth of a noble, not by his yearly income, but by the number of his serfs. Some laboured on his estates; others were free to go to towns if they paid an annual tax.

Emancipation of the Serfs.—Some attempts were made by Government in the early part of the present century to improve the condition of the serfs; but without much effect. In 1858, 47,100,000—more than half the population of European Russia, were serfs. Of these nearly 25 millions were on government lands. Their emancipation began in 1858. Besides these,

21 millions belonged to private individuals, and 14 lakhs were domestic servants. Their emancipation was declared in 1861.

The peasants hitherto attached to the soil were to have all the rights of free cultivators. The zemindars were to give up to the peasants a certain quantity of land, the amount depending upon its quality. The zemindars were to receive in return a certain sum of money, chiefly advanced by Government, which the peasants were to repay by annual instalments extending over 49 years. Domestic servants were to obtain their freedom on condition of serving their masters for two more years.

The *immediate* effects of emancipation were not satisfactory. The peasants had the vices of slaves, and were not properly prepared for liberty. They had been accustomed to obey their masters in everything. This state of things made them idle, ignorant, wanting in foresight to protect themselves against the severity of the climate and bad harvests. They sold their corn, spent their money freely, and believed that, as formerly, their masters must maintain them when they had nothing to live upon. Instead of that, they had to go to money lenders who exacted high interest; and, as in India, when once people get indebted to them they are their virtual slaves for life. Land Banks have recently been established, which may help to improve their condition. It is also proposed to open them in India.

The condition of the zemindars, in most cases, has also become worse. The money received was not a sufficient compensation, and a good deal of it was spent in the cities. When this sum was exhausted, they began cutting down the forests on their estates, the proceeds being spent as if it had been an annual rent.

Domestic Life.—The joint family system formerly prevailed in Russia as in India. All the members, young and old, lived together under the authority of the Head of the House, called in some districts "the Big One." This position was generally filled by the grandfather, or, if he was dead, by the eldest brother. But if incapable, the place might be taken by some other member—it might be by a woman—who was a good manager and possessed the greatest influence. If the Big One was qualified, things went on smoothly; but if not, there were frequent quarrels, generally caused by the female members of the household. It must be allowed that it is very difficult for several sisters-in-law to live together with their children and a mother-in-law in one house. The complaints of the young bride, who finds that her mother-in-law puts all the hard work on her shoulders, form a frequent theme in popular Russian poetry.

Every thing was considered the joint property of the family. Nothing was to be bought or sold, not even by the Big One himself, without the consent of the grown-up males, and all the money that was earned was put into the common purse. When one of the sons left him to work elsewhere, he was expected to bring home or send home all his earnings except what he required for necessary expenses, his wife and children remaining in the house as before.

For Russian agriculture, the three requisites are a man, a woman and a horse. As soon as a son became an able-bodied labourer, it was the duty of the Head of the House to procure him a horse, while "the female Big One" sought to provide him with a wife. The chief consideration in the bride was not beauty, but strength for work. Marriages were sometimes arranged in the larger villages by old women who occupied themselves specially with this business. In other cases, some friend of the two families made up the match.

The joint family system has certain advantages. The expense of living is reduced, and misfortune can be more easily borne by a large family than by a small one. It has, however, its drawbacks, and since the emancipation in 1861, it has been largely given up. The same course will gradually be followed in India.

Russian Villages.—In early times the Russians were obliged to live together for safety. Around them there were dense forests; they were liable to attack from wandering bands of robbers. They needed each other's help for felling trees, for clearing plots for cultivation, for keeping in order the road leading to the prince's fort, the one refuge in case of danger.

The following description is given of an ordinary Russian village. One of average size is generally divided into two by a street. This is wide, but it is not paved. Furrowed in all directions by the flow from the melted snow, it is hollowed out into countless mud-puddles, and in places overgrown by grass. Here and there along the streets are wooden houses, covered with thatch. In the north, where there are many forests, the houses are sometimes of great size, and have an upper story.

In the southern provinces, the houses are made, as a rule, of interwoven branches, plastered over with clay, and whitened with chalk. The houses are pretty, clean, shining

with white, with gardens and wreaths of flowers. In Great Russia the beams of the houses are dull-looking; the straw of the roof black; there are no trees, no flowers. The village is dirty; it is smoky, especially in houses without chimneys. In the latter the wood is kindled in a fireplace without a chimney, so that all the warmth and smoke remain within it. When the room is thoroughly warmed, the door is opened to let out the smoke. In this way all the walls soon become black as a chimney.

Many of the houses are built with the gable end towards the street. Behind each of them is a compound, containing a heap of straw and wood. Often young pigs and calves live in the houses along with the people. Behind the compounds are kitchen gardens and small fields of hemp. If the village is of sufficient size, there are three or four streets, that radiate from a central square, in which is, as a rule, a church. There are also crosses, often carved and covered with deeply-cut inscriptions or painted.

The Mir or Village Community.

The Russian *Mir* may be compared to a joint family embracing the whole village. As in many parts of North India, taxes are paid by the village, not by each person separately.

As the joint family has its head, called the Big One, the *mir* has its head, the *Starosta* or village elder. In both the authority is limited; in the one case by the adult members of the family, and in the other by the heads of families. In both there is a certain amount of common property: in the one case the house and nearly all that it contains, and in the other the arable land and pasturage. The joint family is responsible for all the debts; the *mir* for all the taxes.

There are, however, differences. In the *mir* the relations of the members are not so close. The members of a joint family throw all their earnings into one fund; in the *mir* the families pay only a certain fixed sum into the common treasury.

The village community forms a little self-governing republic, in which all have equal rights. All male peasants are enrolled in the census lists, and each village has to pay taxes according to their number. Every peasant who pays taxes is supposed to have a share of the village arable land and pasturage. The division in the larger villages is made into small family groups, who subdivide the land among themselves. Re-distribution is made from time to time as births and deaths occur in families. No peasant can leave the village permanently without permission, and this is given only on condition that he sends the full amount of his taxes.

The meetings are held in the open air, and on holidays when the peasants have plenty of leisure. All come to the assembly. If a woman, by the death of her husband, is the head of the family, she has a right to come and vote. If it is proposed to increase or diminish her household's share of the land and taxes, she is allowed to speak freely, and even to indulge in personal remarks about the families of her opponents. If she cannot succeed by arguments, she tries a flood of tears, which the Russian peasant cannot resist. At times when the men go outside the village to work, the assembly consists chiefly of women: a woman may be the village Elder.

The Elder, as a mark of office, wears a small medal suspended from his neck by a thin brass chain; but his duties in the village parliament are light. The office is not considered a great honour, and it has its trouble and responsibility.

The assemblies are very lively. Order is at times wanting. Every one has a right to speak, but if any young member wishes to indulge in oratory, he is unceremoniously told, "Hold your tongue!" The term "blockhead" is sometimes applied to any one making a foolish proposal. The right of speaking belongs to him who can command attention. Everybody shouts his arguments at the top of his voice. After all have been heard, they mostly come to some arrangement which is generally satisfactory. All submit to the decision. The following proverbs express the feeling: "Who is greater than the *mir?* who can dispute with it!" "The *mir* receives no bribes."

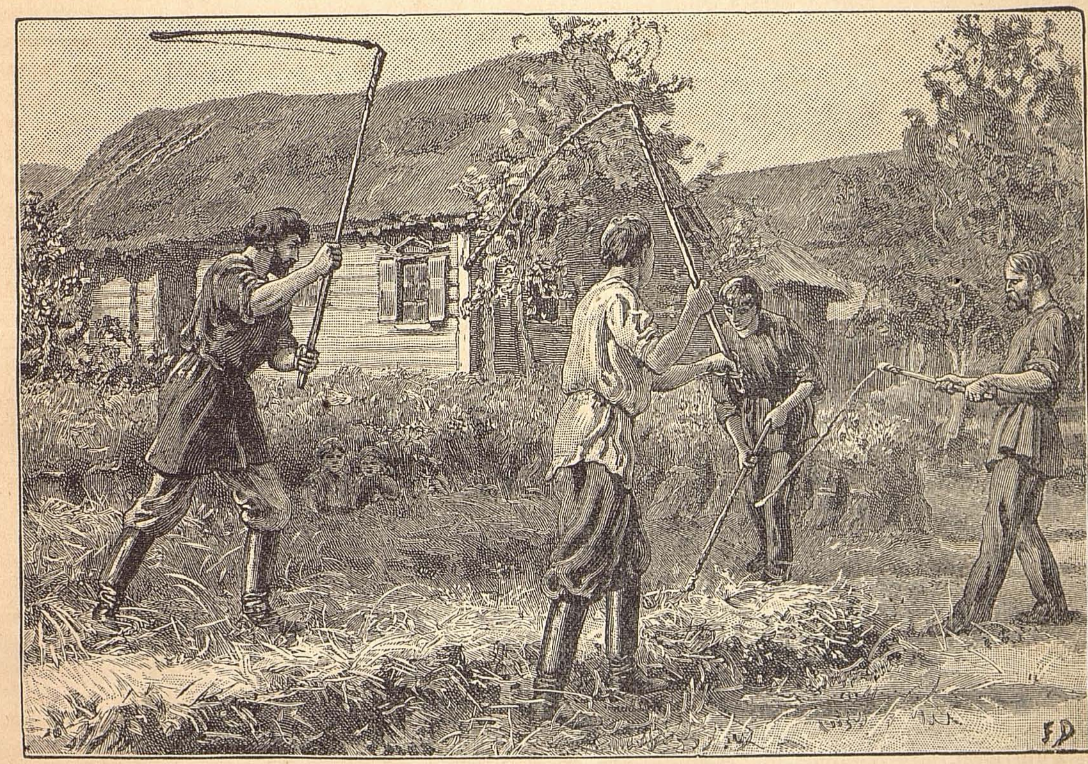
The warmest discussions take place at the allotment of land. If fertile, there is anxiety to obtain as large a share as possible; if poor, to take little. The land belonging to a village generally differs in respect of quantity. Each share therefore contains its proportion of good, middling and poor soil. Hence the allotments are scattered, and sometimes not more than two yards in breadth, increasing the labour. A peasant is not free to cultivate his lot as he thinks proper; he must keep to the customary rotation of corn, oats, and fallow. From

the land changing hands, a peasant tries to get as much out of it as he can while it is in his possession.

The plan of collective property at an early period existed in other countries; but generally it has given way to private property. People take far more care of what is their own, than what they hold in common with others.

AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture in Russia is in a very backward state. The picture represents peasants near Moscow threshing corn with the flail. This is the usual process except in the southern provinces, where the grain is separated, as in India, by the treading of cattle. Improved agricultural implements are coming into use among the large landed proprietors and German settlers; but the peasant adheres to his ancient plough and flail and to his rude methods of cultivation which lessen both the quality and quantity of the produce.



Agriculture is becoming worse and worse. The taxes are heavy, and while peasants are ablest to work, they are taken away for some years to serve in the army. Payment is demanded in cash as soon as the harvest is over; and if the peasants cannot pay, all their available property, with certain exceptions, is sold. They are therefore obliged to sell their grain in haste at low rates, or to borrow the money required. The want of cattle prevents land from being properly manured; so that although the soil in some parts is rich, it is getting exhausted, and the produce is declining.

The cutting down of the forests has had a disastrous effect. The rainfall has been reduced. The trees attracted and held the moisture which was slowly given out for the benefit of agriculture. Now, in some parts, scarcely a tree is to be seen, and the rivulets which formerly nourished the soil have disappeared. The forests also broke the force of the winds, which, piercingly cold in winter and scorchingly hot in summer, sweep over the plains. The hot blasts can wither the corn in a few days, and with them come sand-storms which turn fertile lands into permanent deserts. In winter there is nothing to hold the snow, which is blown together in large heaps. When these melt, torrents are formed which wash away the soil, and cause inundations in the rivers.

In early times the Deccan is said to have been covered with forest. One reason why Bellary and some districts are at present so dry is the cutting down of the forests. The British Government is now taking care of forests, and planting trees in many parts of India.

Famines in Russia.

Nearly every year scarcity is felt in some part of Russia; but in 1891 about 40 millions suffered dreadfully from famine. At first Government censured the newspapers which spoke of the threatened dearth, and did nothing! Not before numerous deaths had taken place, was a committee formed for the suffering districts. Even then the officials intrusted with money for the purchase of food, turned a considerable part of it into their own pockets. The flour bought at St. Petersburg, was found to be mixed with indigestible substances. Thousands of tons of grain lay in the ports of the Baltic and Black Sea, because the railways were unable to transport it into the interior; it was still more difficult to get the corn from the stations to the villages on the bad roads. Tens of thousands of human beings perished from hunger. Parents killed their children, unable to see their sufferings, and committed suicide themselves. Cattle had either died from want of food, or had been sold at nominal prices; horses were offered in vain for one or two rupees each; colts, which resembled mere dogs, for four annas. The effects of the famine must be felt for years from the want of cattle and horses to assist in cultivation.

Revenue.

Money is reckoned in Russia by roubles, which are of about the same value as rupees formerly were in India. A rouble is equal to a hundred copper coins, called kopecks.

The annual revenue of Russia is about 90 crores of roubles; that of India is about 80 crores of rupees. The taxation per head is about thrice as heavy in Russia as in India.

It has been mentioned that the Russians are very fond of vodka. The taxes on spirits yield about 27 crores of roubles-nearly one-third of the entire revenue. Custom duties, taxes on articles imported into the country, are next, amounting to 14 crores. Liberated serfs and crown peasants pay about 9 crores in redemption of land, besides 4 crores derived from land and forests. Trade licences yield about 3½ crores; tobacco nearly 3 crores; state railways, 5 crores.

The following are some of the principal items of expenditure: Interest on debt, 27 crores; army 22½ crores; navy 4 crores; finances 11 crores; roads and railways 3½ crores; justice and public instruction each about 2 crores; the Imperial House and the State Church each about 1 crore.

During the ten years ending in 1887, the total excess of expenditure was 24 crores of roubles. Of late years there has been apparently an improvement.

In 1888 the railway debt amount to 165 millions, and the total debt to 746 millions sterling.

RUSSIAN RECRUITS GOING TO JOIN THE ARMY.

The Army.

Since 1874, with certain exceptions in the case of clergymen, doctors and teachers, all men from their 21st year are obliged to serve in the army. The period of service in European Russia is 5 years in the active army, 13 years in the reserve, and 5 years in

the second reserve. In 1890 there were 878,011 young men found liable to military service. Of these 162,000 were found too weak; about 190,000 were placed in the 2nd reserve as being single workers in their families, and about 260,000 were taken into the active army.

On a peace footing the army numbers 843,000 men and 137,000 horses. On war footing, the number is 2,500,000 men, and 578,000 horses.

The *Edinburgh Review* has the following remarks on the Russian army:

"Of all the abuses and anomalies to be found in Russia, this is one of the most extraordinary—a starving people, an exhausted exchequer, and a colossal military expenditure. No power in earth has the slightest interest or intention to attack Russia. Its territory is practically unassailable. Such an army could only be needed to carry out a highly aggressive policy, which the Czar disclaims; but it is the terror of Europe, largely contributing to the oppressive military system in other countries, which is the curse of our times, and it causes the ruin of the people and the State. Burdened with debts, with calamities, and with excessive armaments, the present Czar counts for less than any of his predecessors in the politics of the globe. His very life is insecure. He is without an ally on whom reliance can be placed. His barren conquests in Central Asia have only increased his embarrassments, and added nothing to his resources or his power. The penury of the Empire has materially lessened its influence; and we can only conjecture that the army is maintained at its present enormous strength because he is afraid to reduce so formidable a power." January, 1893, pp. 30, 31.

Not only are other European nations obliged to maintain immense armies, but the Indian Government is compelled to spend large sums to protect the western frontier from invasion.

Education.

Of all Christian countries in Europe, Russia is the worst educated. Out of Russian males one in five may be able to read; out of Russian women hardly one in ten. There is only one primary school for each 2500 inhabitants.

It has always been the policy of the Russian Government to keep the people in ignorance, because only under this condition is autocracy possible. The only exception was for a short time during the reign of Alexander II. After the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, thousands of schools, Sunday schools, and evening classes were opened, and school books were published in great numbers. The universities were thrown open to students, male and female. But Government soon put a stop to the movement.

In Russia the Universities are centres of political life. When a government with despotic power punishes as a crime the least opposition to its will, men whom age or wealth has made cautious keep quiet, and the struggle is left to the young who are not wanting in courage or devotion. A desire for greater liberty was awakened in the minds of the students. Suspected of revolutionary designs, they were watched by the police. If several students met in the room of one of their number, alarm was excited. The porters and even the proprietors of the rooms were bound to give prompt information to the police, by whom such meetings were often dispersed. How does he pass his time? Whom does he associate with? What time does he generally come home? What does he read? What does he write? were some of the questions put with regard to the students. During their absence their books and papers were examined, and anything suspicious was brought to the notice of the police. Such proceedings led to occasional outbreaks among the students which were mercilessly repressed. Sometimes they were marched to prison, beaten by the police, expelled, or banished without trial to Siberia.

Although female education generally is in a very low state, through the persistent efforts of the women themselves, they managed to get by 1886 four university colleges for ladies, with 1,442 students, one medical academy with 500 students, and several secondary schools. All these, though maintained by private subscriptions, were closed by Alexander III., in 1886, because the students were suspected of revolutionary designs. In 1890 one college was opened with 400 students. There are about 700 lady doctors in Russia, nearly one-half of them employed by Government. The few male doctors settle chiefly in the towns where they can make most money; the women are content with moderate fees, and settle in the country.

In 1891 thousands of schools were suppressed, and the primary schools were all placed in the hands of the clergy, who, at the same time, received secret instructions to prevent the

opening of new schools. Schools established in some parts by private liberality have been declared revolutionary and suppressed. In 1886 there existed in European Russia, with 82 millions of inhabitants, only 39,000 primary schools, attended by two millions of children.

As in India, the great aim of Russian students is to enter government service. The result is that there are more educated men in Russia than can find employment. Every year the universities turn out swarms of youths who, unable to gain a place in the civil or military services, in a country where there are few openings for trained men, drift into despair, bitterness against the Government, and swell the ranks of the Nihilists who will be described under another heading.

Language and Literature.

Russian is an Aryan language, belonging to the eastern branch of the Slavonic family. It has seven cases, and is very copious. A translation of part of the Scriptures into Slavonic was made in the 9th century. The rude alphabet used first instructed the Russian nation in letters, and by its quaint Greek characters still testifies, in every Russian book, the Greek source of the religion and literature of the empire.

"The travellers who visited Russia in the 17th century were struck by the backwardness of its civilisation. At a time when Western Europe was covered with universities, and printing presses were found in every city, copying with the pen was the only method of multiplying books practised by the Russians. In 1563 the first printing press introduced into the country was closed, being regarded as an invention of the devil. The workmen only escaped prosecution for magic by flight. Arabic numerals, introduced into Europe in the 12th century, were not used in Russia until the seventeenth.* .

Pushkin is considered the greatest Russian poet. One of the most popular writers is Krilof, whose fables are greatly admired. A few examples may be given.

Canine Friendship.—Two dogs Barbos and Polkan, lay near a cook-room door basking in the sun. They had eaten till they were satiated, and were ready for agreeable conversation. "What," says Polkan, "can be pleasanter than to live heart to heart with a friend? in everything to help one another; not to sleep or eat without one's friend, and to defend his body with all one's force. Suppose, for instance, you and I were to contract such a friendship. I venture to say we should not be able to tell how quickly time was flying, it would be so pleasant."

"That is true. So be it," replies Barbos. "Long has it been grievous to me, my dear Polkan, that we, who are dogs of the same compound, cannot spend a single day without quarrelling; and why is it? Thanks to our master we are neither closely shut up nor ill-fed. Besides, it is really scandalous. From the earliest times the dog has been the type of friendship; yet you scarcely ever see more friendship among dogs than among men."

"Let us make manifest an instance of it to our own times," says Polkan.

Straightway the new friends began to caress and fondle each other. They know not, in their raptures, to what to liken themselves.

"Away with all quarrels, all envy, all malice!"

Unluckily, at this moment the cook tosses a bone out of the kitchen. Our new friends flung themselves upon it furiously. What has become of their harmonious alliance? They seize each other by the throat, so that their hair goes flying to the winds, and even torrents of water will scarcely separate them.

The world is full of such friendships. One would not be wrong if one said of friends, as they are now-a-days, that they are almost all alike in respect to their friendship. To listen to them, you would imagine they were perfectly unanimous. But just throw them a bone; they will behave exactly like our dogs.

The frequent collusion between officials, when one is the accused and the other the judge, is illustrated in a fable, called "The Pike," a voracious fresh water fish. The pike has been plundering the pond in which he lives. The little fishes have abundance of proofs, and the culprit is brought before the court in a large basin of water. The judges were two asses and three goats that lived close by, and to aid them, a most experienced fox was joined to their number. People said that the fox was never without fish; that the pike gave him as much as he wanted. The evidence, however, was so clear that the pike was sentenced to be hanged. "Oh," said the fox, "hanging is too good for him. Let us drown him." "The

* Stepniak, *Russia under the Tzars.* Vol. 1. pp. 56, 57.

fox is right," cried the judges, and thereupon the thief was taken and thrown into the river, which was no punishment at all.

"The Fox and the Marmot" is a lesson for bribe-takers. "Whither are you running," says the latter to the former, "without daring to look on either side of you!" "Calumny, calumny!" replies the fox; "I have been driven out as a rogue, but *you* know whether I rendered justice or not in that poultry yard. There was nothing to gain there; it was a most ungrateful office. I had no sleep at night, by day I had scarcely time to eat a mouthful, and after all, through hatred and calumny, I am disgraced. Call *me* a thief indeed! I only ask you whether I can be justly accused of the slightest act of dishonesty?" "Certainly not, my dear friend," is the reply, "but I must say to my regret that I have sometimes seen feathers* sticking to your muzzle."

"More than one functionary," says Krilof in the moral, "complains of his poverty, and declares that neither he nor his wife ever received presents. Nevertheless in time he builds a villa, and buys an estate. How does he balance his disbursements and receipts? If you wanted to prove before a judge that he had taken bribes, you would find it difficult; yet every one must acknowledge that the feathers are quite visible round the gentleman's mouth."

Count Leo Tolstoi is the most eminent living Russian novelist and social reformer. He is a descendant of Count Peter Tolstoi, the companion of Peter the Great. After attending the University of Kazan, in 1851, at the age of 23, he entered the army, and took part in the Crimean war. At its close in 1856, he resigned his commission, and devoted himself to literature. His *War and Peace,* a tale of the invasion of Russia by Napoleon in 1812, is regarded by the Russians as his masterpiece.

For a time he doubted the existence of God, and was miserable. He thus describes the change which took place: "I do not live when I lose faith in the existence of God, I only really live when I feel and seek Him. What more do I seek? And a voice within me seemed to cry, 'This is He! He without whom there is no life.' To know God and to live are one. God is life, and stronger than ever rose up the life within and around me, and the light that then shone never left me again."

ALEXANDER III., EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

During the later years of his life one of his great objects has been to benefit the peasants of Russia. He has even adopted their dress, and taken part in their field labours. During the recent famine he did much to alleviate the suffering around him. Some of his religious views are peculiar; but he has nobly endeavoured, at great self-sacrifice, to promote the reforms which he considers necessary.

Government.

The government of Russia is an absolute, hereditary monarchy. It is one of the most despotic in the world. The emperor calls himself *autocrat* (self-power), one who rules by his own right, and not subject to restriction. The title *Czar,* or more correctly *Tsar,* is perhaps a corruption of Cæsar.

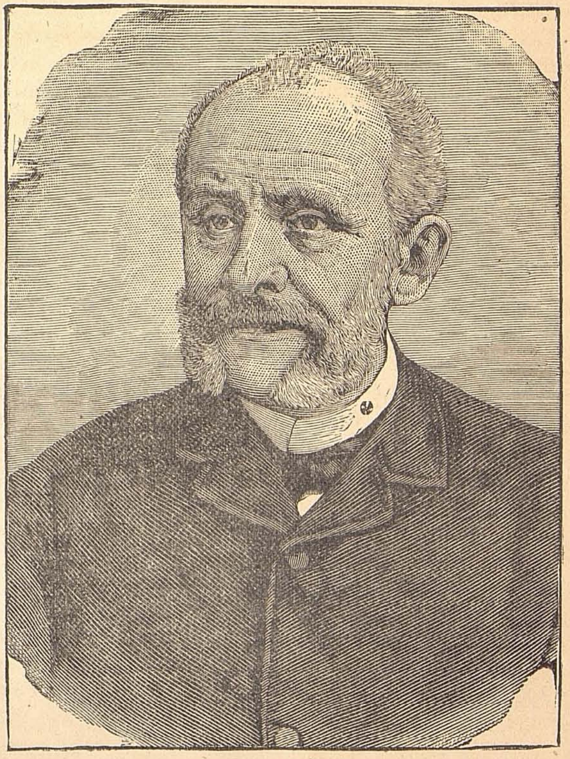
It has, however, been shown that while the supreme rule is most despotic, the village communities are virtually, to a large extent, self-governing.

In 1866 provincial assemblies, called *Zemstvos,* were organised, somewhat like the Local Fund Boards of India, but in 1890 their powers were greatly reduced.

* The feathers of fowls which the fox had killed and eaten.

Alexander III., the present emperor, was born in 1845. He was the eldest son of Alexander II. In 1866 he married a daughter of the King of Denmark, sister of the Princess of Wales. The Emperor of Russia and the Prince of Wales are thus brothers-in-law. He ascended the throne in 1881 at the death of his father by assassination. Grand Duke Nicholas, his eldest son and heir apparent, was born in 1868. In 1890 he visited India. An attempt was made to assassinate him in Japan.

All power rests with the emperor, his will is law. Although he has four great Councils, he is free to accept or reject their resolutions, and to act as he sees fit. He has several Ministers; but, as a Russian remarked, he is his own minister. The most noted Russian statesman at present is Count de Giers, Minister of Foreign Affairs.



COUNT DE GIERS.

Russia contains a large number of officials, insufficiently paid, who try by dishonest means to make up their income. A Russian official has thus been described: "Unscrupulousness is characteristic of his proceedings. He is under an absolute monarchy of the most uncompromising kind; entire subservience is his necessary attitude to those above him. Yet with this goes much untrustworthiness; readiness to act as a spy, to procure his own advancement by another's fall. And with all this goes bribery and corruption to the most intense extent. The Russian official would hardly know himself without bribes. He grinds those below him, and is servile to those above him." The Emperor Nicholas once exclaimed in despair, "My son and myself are the only persons in this country who do not steal."

Every one in Russia is liable to secret arrest on a mere order of Government, and may be banished to Siberia for life without trial.

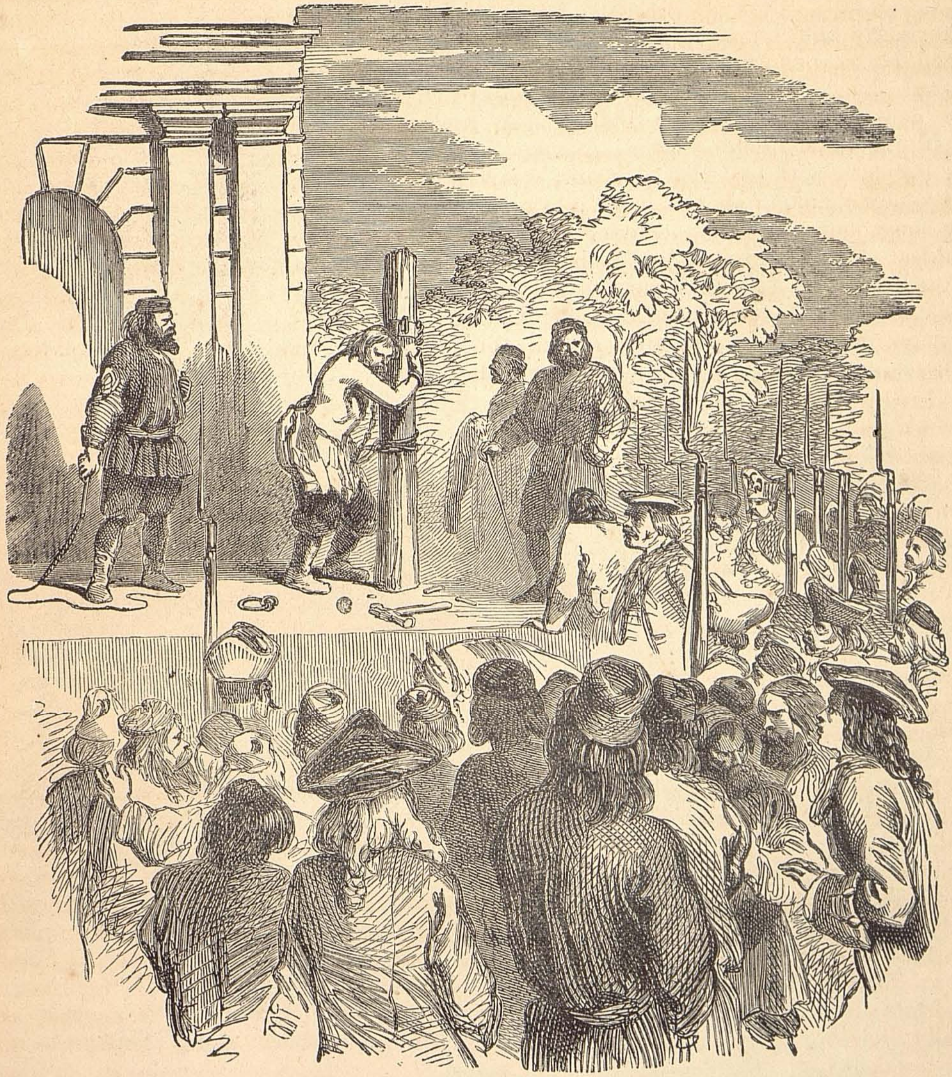
The police swarm everywhere, some in uniform, and others in ordinary dress that they may not be known. Travellers require passports, and their movements have to be reported. If the slightest suspicion rests on any one, he is taken up by the police. The arrests are generally made in the middle of the night as people are then at home, and less attention is attracted than by day. All that the neighbours know next morning as that somebody has disappeared. After detected plots, when searches are made by the hundred, there is hardly a family belonging to the educated classes who, on retiring to rest do not tremble at the thought that before morning they may be roused from their sleep by the police. Sometimes people are deceived by a falsehood. People have been alarmed by a cry of fire, and rushing out in haste, half clad, have been carried off. A pretended telegram is another artifice. Generally, however, they knock loudly, crying, "The police! the police! open the door or we will break it in."

An English traveller says: "If a lodger in a hotel misses anything and informs the police of his loss, they will make him pay for laying his complaint before them; they will make the hotel-keeper pay for suffering things to be stolen from his hotel; and if they know the thief, they may be at the same time receiving money from *him* in consideration of not taking him into custody. A person of my acquaintance had a book stolen from him and having traced it to a book-stall was foolish enough to give the suspected thief into custody. Gladly did the policeman take the thief, gladly did the thief go with the policeman. The loser of the book in the meanwhile had to appear time after time at the police office and to give money on each occasion, until at last he was allowed to withdraw his charge, on payment of two roubles."*

* Sutherland Edwards, Vol. I. p. 30.

Efforts have been made to improve the police, but with no great success. The money which ought to be devoted to the payment of sufficient salaries to the police and other officials, is spent on the army.

Russia was noted for its severe punishment, called the *knout*. The knout is a whip with a handle about two feet long, to which is fastened a leather thong, with a brass ring at the end; to this ring is affixed a strip of hide, terminating in a beak-like hook. The hide is soaked in milk and dried in the sun to make it harder. Should it fall on the edge, it cuts like a pen-knife. Its inflection has thus been described:



THE KNOUT.

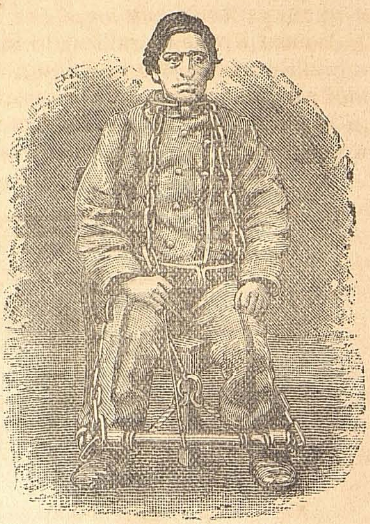
Within a circle formed by a number of soldiers was a stout post, to which a man was fastened, stripped to the waist. By his side stood an athletic man, holding in his hand the knout. A yell of mortal agony broke forth from the poor wretch when the first stroke descended, burying, as it seemed, the hard thong of the fearful scourge in the lacerated quivering flesh, and followed, when withdrawn, by a copious stream of blood.

Again and again the executioner, with the adroitness of long practice and the indifference which familiarity engenders, or with brutal pride in his horrid skill, renewed his strokes till the ground around was sodden with blood, and the first piercing shrieks, groanings, and cries for mercy of the tortured man had subsided into convulsive moanings, and every

fibre of his body appeared to be broken up and destroyed. When the infliction had ceased, the victim was stretched on the ground, apparently lifeless.

The knout has generally been discontinued; but in 1880 it is said to have been still used at two penal settlements in Asia.

Banishment to Siberia is a frequent form of punishment. A Russian writer says: "During the last ten years no less than 168,000 human beings have been transported to Siberia, during this short space of time, more than a half of them without trial."



A RUSSIAN CONVICT.

Formerly the exiles traversed on foot all the distance between Moscow and the place to which they were despatched. They had thus to walk about 4,700 miles to reach the hard-labour colonies beyond Lake Baikal. A row of soldiers marched in front. Behind them advanced heavily the hard-labour convicts, with half-shaved heads, wearing grey clothes, with a yellow diamond on the back, and open shoes worn out by the long journey. Each convict wore a chain riveted to his ankles. The chain went up each leg and was suspended to a girdle. Another chain closely tied both hands, and a third chain bound together 6 or 8 convicts. Part of the journey is now performed by steamer or rail; but there are, in many cases, long distances to be yet traversed on foot.

EXILES ON THE WAY TO SIBERIA IN FORMER TIMES.

There is the strictest censorship of the press. No paper dares make any remark on matters which, by a police ordinance, are excluded from public discussion; but freedom is given to attack Germany or England as the supposed enemies of Russia. Since the beginning of the present reign several of the principal newspapers have been either at once suppressed, or harassed to death by incessant persecutions. Sometimes they were suspended for periods

varying from 4 weeks to 8 months; or they were forbidden to publish advertisements and sell by retail. No foreign newspaper is allowed to enter Russia till it has been examined. Sometimes a whole paper is destroyed; at other times a paragraph is blotted out. An attempt is made to make the Russians believe that they are well governed and have no cause of complaint.

The motto of the Emperor Nicholas was, "One law, one language, one religion." The pledge given that certain provinces should retain their old laws was broken. Efforts were made to Russianise the Poles and Germans in Russia by forbidding their languages to be taught in schools. Religious persecution will be noticed under a separate heading.

A ukase, or imperial decree, of 1887, excluded all foreigners from holding land in Russia, and these foreign proprietors, mostly Germans, were forced to sell their estates at nominal prices. German manufacturers were expelled if they could not bribe the authorities to connive at their stay. Even speaking German is considered an offence. When a gentleman was taking leave of a German friend at a railway station, he was accosted by an official, who reminded him, "This is Russia, not Germany; you would do well not to forget this."

The Jews have been cruelly persecuted by the present emperor. Formerly about half the Jews in the world were found in Russia. Great numbers have been forced to emigrate with the loss of their property; others have been so crowded together that it is impossible for them to gain a livelihood. Their treatment has excited the indignation of the civilized world. Russia has been rightly styled by Herbert Spencer, "the great barbarian empire."

Religious Persecution.—In India complete religious liberty is granted by the Queen's Proclamation: "We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith and observances." This idea of religious toleration is derived from Christianity. The King of Babylon threatened to cast into a fiery furnace any who did not worship the golden image which he set up. The Romans put to death many thousands of the early Christians because they would not worship images of the emperor. This old spirit still exists in Russia, although it professes a corrupt form of Christianity.

From 1682 to 1712 there was a fierce persecution of Christians who separated from the national church. Any not attending church were to be examined, if necessary, under torture, to ascertain whether they were dissenters,* and who had perverted them. Any dissenter discovered was flogged with the knout till he recanted. If he refused, he was burned alive. Baptists, who believe that only grown-up persons should be baptized, were burned alive without permission to save their lives by recantation. Thousands of poor peasants and unlettered women thus perished. But the doctrines of the dissenters were proclaimed between the blows of the knout or chanted amid the smoke and flame of the martyr's fire. Instead of being rooted out, they increased more and more. Peter the Great left them to live in peace, on condition they paid a double poll tax. Religious persecution has been revived under the present Emperor, although those, thus cruelly treated, are his best subjects.

Roman Catholics are excluded from every public employment. If a Russian leaves the State Church he becomes incapable of owning property and of inheriting; his children are taken from him, and those who have persuaded him to change his religion are punished by exile to Siberia, or corporal punishment and imprisonment with hard labour from one to two years.

The only exception is in the case of Muhammadans. In some parts of the empire they are allowed to make proselytes without hindrance. They alone seem to enjoy real liberty in this nominally Christian country.

Nihilism.

This movement largely originated in Russian misgovernment and tyranny. The word *nihil*, in Latin, means *nothing*. Its extreme advocates held doctrines like the following: "The old world must be destroyed and replaced by a new one. Let your own happiness be your only law. Our first work must be destruction and annihilation of everything as it now exists; you must accustom yourself to destroy everything, the good with the bad." Some urged the peasants to massacre the upper classes, when they would have no more taxes to pay, and the land would all come to them. The Nihilists hesitated at no crime which they

* Persons who separate from an established church.

supposed would further their cause. One of the principal means was the assassination of men in power.

The Nihilist movement in Russia was largely carried on by the students of colleges, both male and female. Russian students, like the Bengalis, are fond of politics. On this account studies were neglected. As already mentioned, more attended the universities than could obtain government employ, which led to discontent and revolutionary designs. Some of the measures proposed were so absurd that it was said there were two kinds of Nihilists in Russia, "Those who had nothing in their heads, and those who had nothing in their pockets."

It is admitted that the remedies hitherto applied have done little to mitigate the evils of Nihilism. "It is not" says a writer, "by imprisoning and sending into exile, hundreds and thousands of people, justly or unjustly accused of deeds which they may or may not have committed, that peace will be restored." The supreme remedy, say the Liberals, is to give the country a constitutional form of government.

Russian Christianity.

Christians are divided into three great churches—the Protestants, Roman Catholic, and Greek. The Russians belong to the third. Protestants are so called because they *protested* or made a declaration against certain doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church acknowledges the Pope of Rome as its head; the Greek Church does not, but has different heads in different countries. It is sometimes called the *Eastern* Church, from its position in the east of Europe.

The Russians were heathen for about a thousand years after Christ. Their idols appear to have been made of wood, and their worship was very simple. In 955 A.D. Olga, the mother of the reigning Prince, went to Constantinople and was there baptized as a Christian. Before her death, she forbade the heathen ceremonies customary at funerals. Her grandson Vladimir besieged Kherson, and vowed he would be baptized if he succeeded. He then asked in marriage Anne, the sister of the Emperor Basil of Constantinople, under the promise of his own conversion. After Vladimir was baptised himself, he issued orders for a great baptism of his people at Kieff, on the banks of the Dnieper. A large wooden idol, called Peroun, stood on a hill there. It was dragged down at a horse's tail, flogged by twelve horsemen, and thrown into the river. The whole people of Kieff were baptised in the river, and at Kieff the first Christian Church was erected. Vladimir is honoured by the Russians to this day as "Vladimir equal to an Apostle." The Russians were not converted by missionaries, but obeyed their prince. None suffered martyrdom.

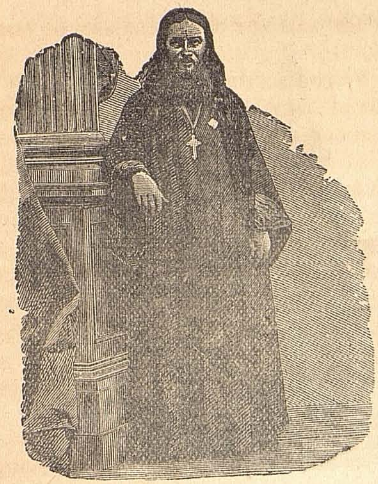
For five centuries the heads of the Russian Church were appointed from Constantinople; but in 1582 the chief bishop of Moscow was created a patriarch, the highest dignity in the church. Peter the Great abolished the patriarchate, and appointed a governing body, called the Holy Synod, of which the Czar is the head.

The most distinguished of the Russian Patriarchs was Nicon, originally a peasant. He introduced many reforms. To root out drunkenness, he had his peons going round the city, and when any priest or monk was found intoxicated, he was taken to prison and flogged. Formerly women had been forbidden to enter churches. At his request, the Empress, who had never before entered a church except by night, now appeared publicly by day. He also revived preaching.

At that time the books used in the Church services were full of errors, caused by ignorant copyists. Nicon obtained the best Greek manuscripts, and had the books carefully revised. Their introduction caused a great schism, a number of people attaching a superstitious reverence to the old books. They were regarded as magical ceremonies, apt to lose their virtue by the slightest alteration. Thus was formed the large sect of the Raskolniks, or "Old Believers," still existing in Russia, who have suffered great persecution at different periods.

Nicon fell into disgrace and was banished for several years. The Emperor Alexis wished him to return from exile, and on his deathbed sent messengers begging full forgiveness; but before it was received he had passed away.

Russian Priests.—Russian priests are called popes or fathers. They are divided into two classes, called from their dress the Black and White clergy. The black clergy have black cloth gowns and high black caps. They live in houses together, and are not allowed to marry. All the bishops are monks. The white clergy are the village priests. They wear a coat buttoned up to the chin, and their hats have broad rims. No one can be made a priest till



RUSSIAN MONK.

he has a wife. If he loses his wife, he is not allowed to marry again, and he often becomes a monk. The clergy are not allowed to cut their hair or to shave; so they have long hair falling over their shoulders, which makes some of them look like women. A large cross hangs on their breast by a chain round the neck.

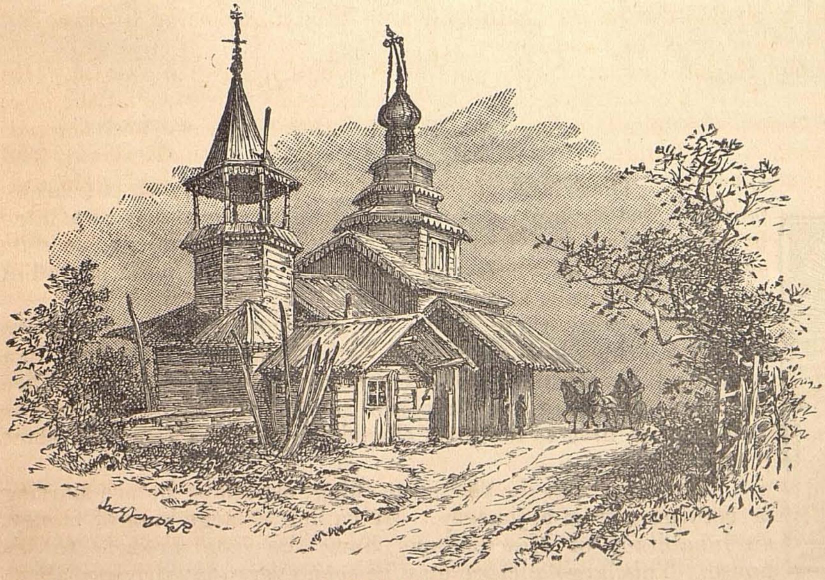
A NUN COLLECTING ALMS.

Russians, when they meet a priest, behave very respectfully to him. Instead of shaking hands, they kiss the back of his hand, and ask him to give them his blessing.

The village priests are generally very poor, and often are obliged to cultivate their fields themselves. Part of their income arises from the fees at marriages, funerals, and other occasions. The priests are, in general, poorly educated, and their conduct is sometimes such that they do not deserve the esteem of the people. But there are many exceptions.

Besides priests, there are women, called nuns, devoted to a religious life, who live in buildings, called convents or nunneries. They take three vows, poverty, chastity, and obedience.

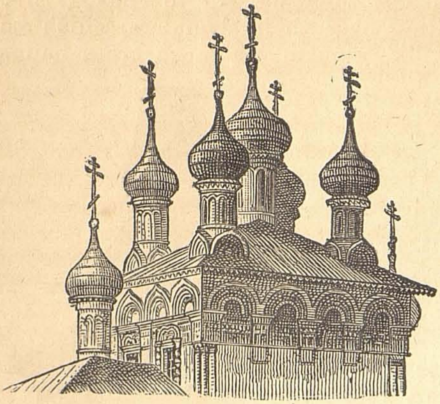
Churches.—The churches differ according to the place. In villages and small towns, they are comparatively plain; in large cities they are highly ornamented. A cross is the general form, with a large dome in the centre, and at the four corners smaller ones, the pinnacles crowned with crosses. There is one principal entrance, with numerous pillars, and three smaller ones without pillars. The domes are often painted with bright colours, and ornamented with gold.



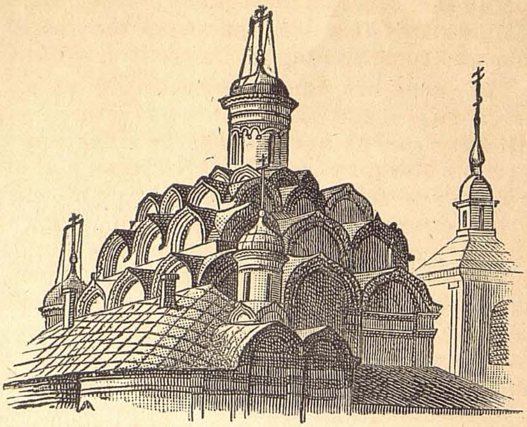
A VILLAGE CHURCH.

Various forms of church domes are shown below.

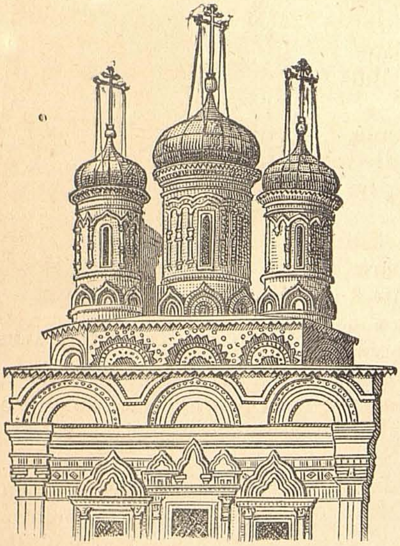
The Russian Church forbids images, but the greatest veneration is shown for sacred pictures, called *icons,* from a Greek word meaning, an image. The churches of Moscow, from top to bottom, from side to side, walls, roof and pillars, are a mass of gilded pictures. Some in the small compartments are minute in size: others have gigantic faces which look down with their large open eyes from



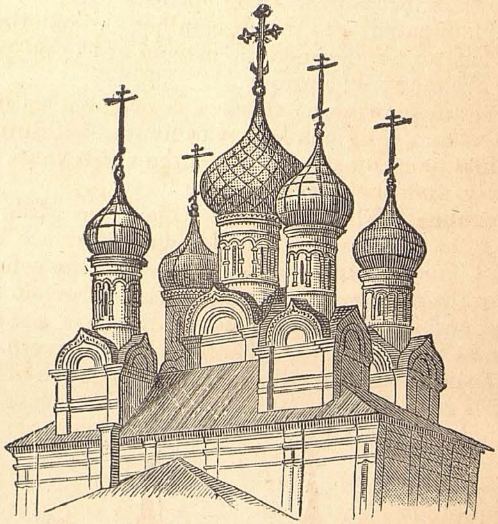
CHURCH NEAR MOSCOW.



CATHEDRAL NEAR MOSCOW.



CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, MOSCOW.



CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN, MOSCOW.

ICON.

the roof. There are pictures of apostles, prophets, patriarchs, parables, history, and legend. One picture, said to have been painted by Constantine the Great and obtained by Vladimir, is used on every great public occasion, and placed in the most sacred of Russian Cathedrals, and called "Our Lady of Vladimir."

At Moscow, there is a famous icon, called the Iberian Madonna, which is supposed to work miracles. It is kept in a little chapel near one of the entrances to the Kremlin. When the Czar or one of the Imperial family arrives at Moscow, he always goes first to the little chapel, and there offers up a short prayer.

Noblemen also do the same thing, especially before starting or returning from a journey. By paying a large sum of money, an inhabitant of Moscow may have the icon brought to his house. This large picture may be seen every day driving about Moscow in a carriage drawn by four horses abreast. The coach-

man is always bareheaded, and two priests sit inside the carriage with the picture. The people in the street uncover and cross themselves when it passes.

When this Icon is absent from the chapel, a copy of it is put in its place there, so that people who come to worship before it may not be disappointed.

The Icons are not confined to churches. The Russians hang their bodies, their rooms, their doorways, and their gateways with crosses and pictures of the saints. In the markets of St. Petersburgh and other large cities may be seen in heaps little brass crosses, pictures of the virgin Mary, St. John, St. Nicholas, and others. On the walls of the shops hang glittering figures of false silver and gold of all shapes. There are small ones, a few inches in length and breadth, which the servants of great families fetch away in great numbers to nail up in every room. There are large ones, 6 or 8 feet high, for merchants who, with their wives and children, prostrate themselves before them. The Icon is generally opposite the door and close to the ceiling. The Russians cross themselves before it and bow as they enter. They always say their prayers before these pictures.

Wax candles are also used in Russian worship. They are made of all sorts and sizes. Some are as thick as a man and as tall as a pillar; others are not thicker than cord. Many are surrounded with gilding; others with silver and gold wire wrought into all sorts of small figures, garnished with red and blue beads.

There are no seats in the churches; all the people stand or kneel. The men stand in front, and the women behind. The Czar himself stands during divine service.

The priests read parts of the Bible; not in Latin, as the Roman Catholics do; nor in Russian, but in an old Slavonic language which very few of the people understand. There are no musical instruments in the churches; but men and boys sing beautiful hymns. None of the people join in the singing.

Those present sometimes bow down to the ground, till they touch the floor with their foreheads. They think that their worship is more acceptable on this account.

Fasts.—The Greek church has numerous fasts, far more rigorously kept than in Roman Catholic countries. Besides the forty days of Lent before Easter, the Christmas fast lasts from November 15th to Christmas Day, the 25th December. Wednesdays and Fridays almost throughout the year are also fast days. They number in all 226 days. Every article of animal food except fish is forbidden, and some abstain likewise from fish. Even milk and butter are not used. A kind of milk is made from almonds, and vegetable oil is used instead of butter. The peasants do not work on holidays, so that much valuable time is lost, especially as they sometimes occur during harvest or when labour is greatly needed.

Easter.—This is the chief Russian festival, in memory of Christ rising from the dead. On Good Friday, the day Jesus Christ was crucified, there is a long box placed in the churches, covered with a cloth on which the body of the Saviour is painted with His five bleeding wounds. Just before midnight on Saturday, crowds of people hasten to the church. At the church door each person buys a taper. When the cloth strikes twelve, all these tapers are suddenly lighted, and the priests begin to sing, "Christ is risen!"

Then great joy is shown by all. They shake hands and kiss each other, all the bells ring and cannon are fired, the churches are blazing with lights.

On Easter Sunday, every one who meets a friend or an acquaintance cries out, "Christ is risen!" He then kisses him three times on each cheek, and presses an egg into his hand. The reply to "Christ is risen," is "He is risen indeed."

The day ends in feasting and drinking after the long fast.

Pilgrimages.—Pilgrimages are much practised in Russia. The people do not go in crowds, as in Roman Catholic countries, but singly. In fulfilment of some vow, or from some inward impulse, and not under any order of the Church, the Russian takes his staff and starts for one of the supposed holy places.

Defects.—Russian Christianity resembles Hinduism in paying great attention to the outward forms of religion. As already mentioned, there are pictures in every room to which reverence is paid. Before sitting down to a meal, a Russian makes the sign of the cross, looking at the same time towards the eastern corner of the room where the holy picture is hung. Attention to religious ceremonies is not enough. God is a spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. A religion which does not lead to holiness of life is worthless. Hindus often look upon morality and religion as two distinct things. A devout Hindu may be very immoral. This is a great mistake.

The Russians also resemble the Hindus in their tendency to fatalism. They suppose that sickness and other calamities are ordained by God, and that it is both useless and impious to take means to avert them.

Outline of Russian History.

The early history of Russia is very uncertain. At a remote period it was occupied by wild tribes, some of them very fierce. A widow was expected to die on her husband's funeral pile; a mother was allowed to put to death daughters whom she did not wish to rear; parents, when aged, were removed in a similar way.

Novgorod (New Town) about a hundred miles south-east of St. Petersburg, seems to have been the first city which rose to eminence. The government was republican. On account of dissensions, it is said that in 864 A. D. Rurik and his two brothers, Scandinavians of the Rus family, were invited to come and rule Novgorod. It became afterwards so prosperous that it had 4 lakhs of inhabitants.

Rurik and his successors quickly established their power over South Russia. Kieff, on the river Dnieper, was taken and made the capital.

Russia was weakened by partition among the sons of the reigning princes, who quarrelled among themselves. During the thirteenth century the Mongols invaded Russia, sacked some of the principal cities, massacring or carrying into captivity many of the inhabitants. For the greater part of two centuries the country was under the Mongols, who exacted crushing tribute from the Russian princes.

In 1380, the Grand Prince Demetrius, encouraged by the blessing and prayers of a hermit, called Sergius, gained a great victory over the Tartars at the battle of the river Don. Two of the monks accompanied the Prince to the field, and fought in armour drawn over their dress. The battle was begun by one of them killing a gigantic Tartar, the champion of the Mussulman army.

The Tartars were finally driven out by Ivan the Great. When he wavered, Archbishop Bassian thus addressed him: "Dost thou fear death? Thou too must die as well as others; death is the lot of all, man, beast, and bird alike; none avoid it. Give me these warriors into my hand, and, old as I am, I will not spare myself nor turn my back upon the Tartars." Ivan returned to the camp, and the Tartars fled without a blow.

Ivan was one of the wisest sovereigns Russia ever had. He married Sophia, niece of the last Christian Emperor of Constantinople, and invited engineers, architects, and other able men to come to Russia. Amongst other great works he rebuilt the Kremlin of Moscow. Instead of dividing his dominions at his death in 1505, he left all to his son Basil, who carried out his father's policy.

Basil's son, Ivan, surnamed the Terrible, was 4 years old when he inherited the throne. As a youth he was badly brought up; and all his evil passions were strengthened. He regarded his subjects as his slaves whom he might put to death at pleasure. He married a good wife, and during her lifetime his conduct was, on the whole, praiseworthy. He tried to introduce Western arts and industries into his dominions; he sought to encourage foreign commerce. After the death of his first wife, he gave himself up to unbridled despotism and cruelties. On the death of his seventh wife, he tried to obtain an eighth from Queen Elizabeth. The lady selected was so terrified from the accounts she heard of her future husband and the number of his previous wives, that she refused to go. He was the first Russian sovereign to assume the title of Czar, and "Autocrat of all the Russias."

Ivan was a curious mixture of superstition and cruelty. He retared sometimes for weeks together to a monastery which he had built for himself near Moscow. He rang the bell for early prayers himself at 3 in the morning. During the services, which lasted 7 hours, he read, chanted, and prayed with such fervour that the marks of his prostration remained on his forehead. At dinner, he read books of religious instruction. In the intervals he went to the dungeons under the monastery to see, with his own eyes, his prisoners tortured, and always returned with a face beaming with delight. In a fit of rage he struck his eldest son with his iron staff and killed him. There was now no one but a young child to succeed him. He was haunted by remorse for this crime till his death, which happened soon after in the year 1584.

In 1591 the last monarch of the house of Rurik died childless, and after the country had suffered greatly for several years, the nobles in 1613 chose Michael Romanoff, as their Czar,

MICHAEL ROMANOFF.

from whom the present imperial line is descended. The Romanoff family came originally from Prussia, and the emperors have generally married German princesses.

Michael died in 1645, and was succeeded by his son Alexis, a good prince who sought the welfare of his subjects. He was twice married. His second wife, Natalia, was the mother of Peter the Great in 1672.

In the time of Alexis, the Russians were the most backward nation in Europe; but from their ignorance they were also the most conceited. Full of false patriotism, like some Bengalis of the present day, it was considered a sin to change or modify any custom inherited from the past. The people, clothed in perfection, had nothing to learn from foreigners, who as they could not speak Russian were called mutes, or dumb persons. Roman Catholics and protestants were regarded as little better than heathens. Contact with them was sinful. When they came to Russia on business, they were confined to certain quarters, and not allowed to remain longer than a period fixed beforehand. When they walked through the streets, people shunned them as if they had small pox. The more the country indulged in self-admiration, the more it tried to preserve itself from contact with the West, the deeper it relapsed into barbarism.*

The Emperor Alexis saw the folly of such a spirit, and sought to encourage foreign intercourse. He published a revised Code of Ordinances. Some of the punishments were very cruel. The penalty for a man who smoked a pipe of tobacco was to have his nose cut off! This, however was soon repealed. In order to have justice done to his subjects, Alexis ordered a special box to be placed in the palace for petitions, which were afterwards taken to himself. At night he would go round and see how far they were answered.

Alexis died in 1676, and was succeeded by his eldest son Feodor. He made several reforms, protected the sciences, and was the first to introduce a system of police in the capital. In 1682 he died childless after a short reign of 6 years. His two brothers, Ivan and Peter, were jointly proclaimed Czar, with their sister Sophia as Regent. When 17 years of age, Peter seized the reins of power himself.

As already mentioned, the Russians were ignorant and disliked foreigners. Peter had more sense, and was willing to learn from any one. He had heard of the greater civilization of the Western nations: he therefore sent numbers of young Russians abroad, some to Holland to learn ship-building, others to Germany to become acquainted with military affairs, some to Italy to learn other arts. When 25 years of age, he resolved to travel himself to gain knowledge. In Holland he worked as a ship-carpenter and blacksmith; he attended hospitals and medical colleges; he examined corn-mills, paper-mills, oil-factories, &c., to introduce these branches of industry into his kingdom. He did the same in England, where he learned something of watchmaking. On his return he opened schools, established manufactories, formed roads and canals, built St. Petersburg, which he made the seat of Government instead of Moscow, and greatly extended his dominions (1689-1725).

PETER THE GREAT.

Peter the Great was badly brought up, and throughout his life he often gave way to violence and excess. He himself said: "I know well my faults, my bursts of passion. I can reform my people; I cannot reform myself." Drinking, however, was a vice which it is said in his later years he abandoned.

Peter the Great was succeeded by his widow, the Empress Catherine I. (1725-1727); and at her death his grandson Peter II. ascended the throne (1727-1730.)

After several changes, Catherine II., known as Catherine the Great, reigned from 1762 to 1796. She extended her empire on the east throughout Siberia, and on the west by the acquisition of the half of Poland. She was succeeded by her son Paul, who was murdered in 1801. Alexander I., Paul's son, then ascended the throne. In the earlier years of his

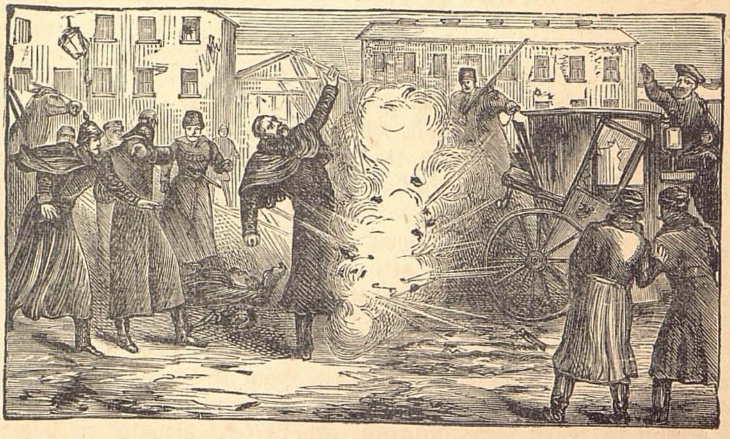
* Stepniak, *Russia under the Tzars*. Vol. I. p. 57.

reign he had repeated wars with France, and Russia was invaded; but he increased his empire by the annexation of several provinces.

Alexander died in 1825, when he was succeeded by his brother Nicholas. He possessed great strength of body and an iron will; but he was very despotic. For thirty years he was the determined enemy of liberal institutions. He converted Poland into a Russian province, and annexed portions of Persia. In 1853 he began a war with Turkey, which became the Crimean war in which Russia suffered immense loss. This hastened the Emperor's death which took place in 1855.

Nicholas was succeeded by his son Alexander II. One of his early acts was the conclusion of the peace of Paris. The great event of his reign was the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. The insurrection in Poland in 1863-64 was put down with great severity, and in 1868 it was incorporated with the Russian Empire. In 1874 all Russians, with a few exceptions, were obliged to enter the army. The misgovernment of her Christian subjects by Turkey, led Russia to declare war against her in 1877. When the Russian army was in sight of Constantinople, a treaty was concluded, by which Russia gained some increase of territory, and the condition of Christians in Turkey was improved.

The growth of revolutionary discontent, under the name of Nihilism, led to severe repressive measures. Several attempts were made upon the Emperor's life. He was fired at; a part of the Winter Palace was blown up; the train by which he was supposed to be travelling was wrecked. The Emperor used to go about St. Petersburg in a carriage drawn by a single horse. On March 13, 1881, when thus driving, an explosive bomb was thrown under the carriage. The Czar unhurt himself stepped out and was giving directions about the wounded, when another bomb was thrown at his feet. His legs were shattered and he fell upon the snow, which was soon reddened with his blood. One person was killed, and about 20 were wounded. The Czar was taken to the palace, resting his poor bleeding head upon an officer who went with him. In the afternoon he died.



ASSASSINATION OF ALEXANDER II.

Alexander II. was succeeded by his son Alexander III. In disposition he resembles his grandfather Nicholas. The cruel treatment of the Jews and his religious persecutions have already been noticed.

The Emperor Alexander I. and Nicholas used to walk unattended every day in one of the streets bordering in the Neva. Alexander III. has to be most jealously guarded to prevent his assassination. A few years ago, when travelling southward by rail, in certain districts, soldiers with loaded rifles, were stationed 50 yards apart, with orders to shoot every one who persisted in approaching the line.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY.

The principal provinces and cities will now be described:

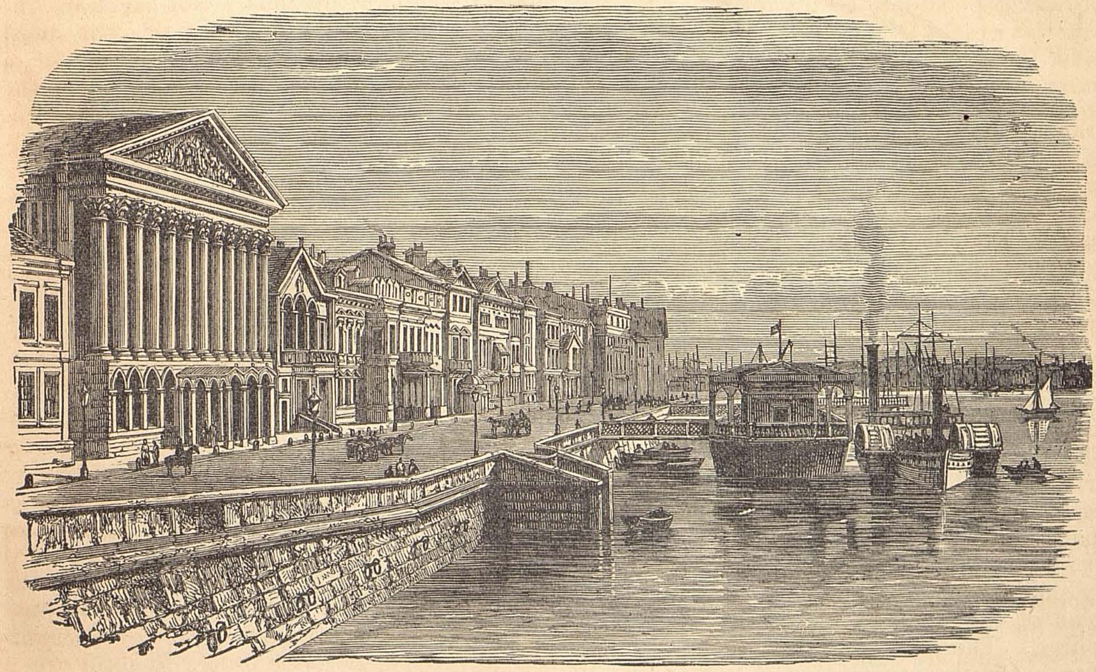
ST. PETERSBURG.

ST. PETERSBURG, the modern capital of Russia, is so called after its founder Peter the Great. Moscow, the old capital, being at a long distance from the sea, Peter wished to have a city which would be at once the capital of the country and its most important seaport. Another object he had in view was to make "a window by which the Russians might look into civilized Europe."

Before the close of 1702 Peter had driven the Swedes from Lake Ladoga and the Neva,

which unites it with the Gulf of Finland, an arm of the Baltic Sea. The site chosen was about half way between the Lake and the Gulf. It was a dreary morass, without stones, without earth, without clay, without wood, without building materials of any kind. Peter struck his staff into the swamp, exclaiming, "Here shall Peter's castle stand," and the work began at once. The foundation of the citadel was laid in an island, now the centre of the city. Peter had a small wooden cottage constructed in which he lived while superintending and sometimes assisting the labourers. This cottage, with the wooden bench on which he sat at the door, is carefully preserved, and still may be seen in St. Petersburg.

Year after year 40,000 peasants from every part of Russia were sent there to labour. The difficulties of the soil, the distance from help, the sickness which swept away a prodigious number of the men,—nothing discouraged the founder. These poor labourers were not furnished with ordinary tools. The greater part of the earth was carried by the workmen in the skirts of their clothes, and in bags made of rags and old mats. In many places the channels of the branches of the river had to be deepened, canals to be dug, and earth heaped together to raise the level of the islands, many of which were so low that they were frequently under water. Nobles and merchants received orders to come and build dwellings. The erection of stone mansions in any other part of the empire was forbidden whilst the new capital was in progress. To assist in providing building materials, no vessel was permitted to sail up the Neva and no peasant's cart to enter the city, without bringing a certain quantity of building stones.



ST. PETERSBURG.

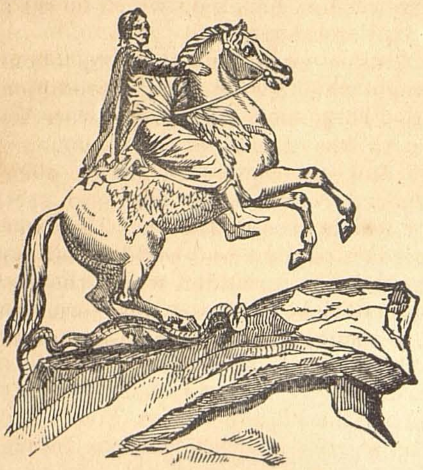
After the citadel, one of the first buildings was a church, and priests were sent for from Moscow to conduct the services. A large hotel was built for the foreign ministers, and another to receive Peter's guests. It is estimated that the foundations of the new city were laid at the cost of at least a lakh of lives.

On a sandy island at the mouth of the river another fort was built which commanded the entrance of the Channel. A town soon arose on an adjacent island, which was called *Kronstadt*, the "City of the Crown."

The city is liable to inundations. When strong westerly winds roll back the waters of the Gulf of Finland, the lower parts of the city are flooded. In 1824, property was destroyed to the value of 4 crores of rupees, and 15,000 persons lost their lives. From its low damp situation, it is the most unhealthy capital in Europe.

St. Petersburg is built along arms and on islands of the river Neva, and has a circuit

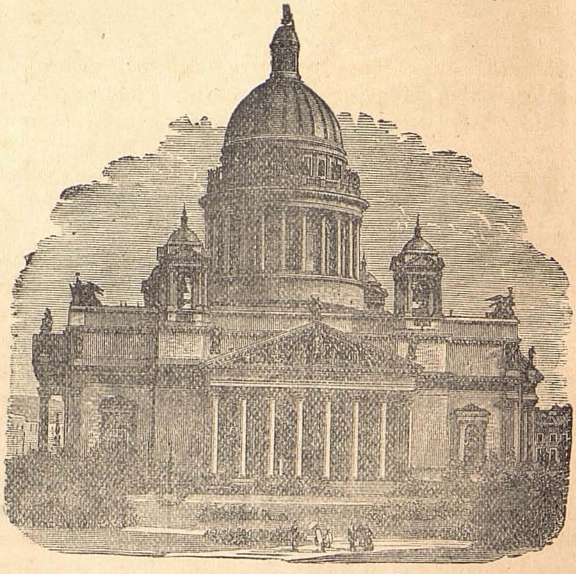
of about 20 miles. The clear blue waters of the Neva flow between massive granite wharfs. The river is crossed by one iron bridge resting on granite piers, but there are wooden bridges and bridges of boats. The river begins to freeze in October and is not open to April. The ice is sometimes 3 cubits thick. As soon as the ice breaks up, and boats are able to cross the river, guns are fired to announce the joyful news. The governor of the fort takes some of the clear water of the Neva to the Emperor in a crystal goblet, and informs his master that the waters are once more free. Formerly the Emperor returned the goblet filled with gold. As the goblets became larger and larger to hold more gold, a fixed sum of about Rs. 1000 is now given.



STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT.

The streets are very broad and regular, but ill paved. The principal radiate from the Grand Square, round which stand the chief buildings of the city. The main streets are called *Prospects*. The principal street, called the Novski Prospect, is 2½ miles in length. The city as approached from the Neva presents a brilliant assemblage of gilded domes, tall spires, immense palaces, and other public buildings.

In the Grand Square stands the colossal statue of Peter the Great on horseback. The granite rock on which it stands weighs 1500 tons. Not far from the Grand Square is the Cathedral of St. Isaac's, the finest church in the Empire. To secure a firm foundation, a forest of piles, 21 feet in length, were forced into the soil at a cost of 20 lakhs. There are four principal entrances, with granite pillars crowned with capitals of bronze. The outer and inner walls are cased in marble. A lofty dome, covered with richly gilt copper, is supported by 30 pillars, and flanked by four smaller gilt domes. Altogether the cost was about 3 crores of rupees.



CATHEDRAL OF ST. ISAAC'S.

The Winter Palace, the ordinary residence of the Imperial family, has its principal face towards the Grand Square, and another towards the Neva. It is a huge building, the interior of which is a marvel of splendour. There are curtains of silk, vast mirrors, ornaments of amber and marble, statues and paintings in untold profusion. In the throne room is an image of St. George, before which burns continually a golden lamp, suspended by chains of precious stones. The drawing room of the Empress has gilded walls and ceiling. The crown jewels are kept in one room. On the sceptre is the largest crown diamond of Europe, valued at 24 lakhs of rupees. It is said to have once formed the eye of an idol in an Indian temple. There is one small plain room in which the Emperor Nicholas died on his camp bed, still covered with his military cloak.

Near the Winter Palace is the Hermitage, containing a splendid collection of pictures, statues, and works of art. Entered from the Hermitage, though forming part of the Winter Palace, is Peter the Great's Gallery. Here is the small gilt chariot in which he sometimes drove; the horse, now stuffed, which he rode at the battle of Poltava; his heavy iron staff; his books, tools, &c. In the centre is a wax figure of the Czar, clothed in the dress which he wore at the coronation of Catherine I. Opposite, on an island of the Neva, rise the fortress and Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, of which the frontispiece is a winter view. The foundation of the fortress was laid by Peter the Great in 1703. The present Cathedral dates from 1756. It has a lofty beautiful gilt spire, terminating in an angel bearing a

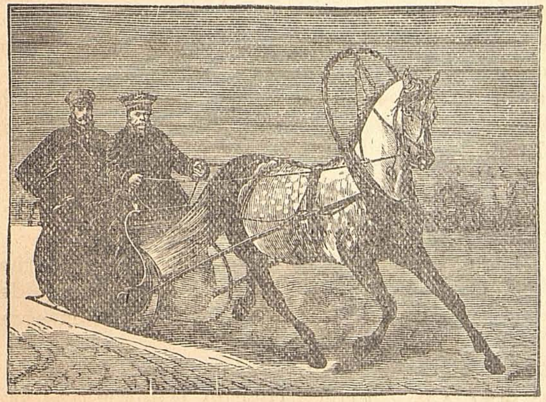
cross. Under the floor of the Cathedral all the Czars, since Peter the Great, have been interred, with the exception of Peter II., who died at Moscow. The fortress is used as a State prison. One of its earliest noble occupants was Alexis, the eldest son of Peter the Great, who was supposed to have been put to death by his father.

In a brick building near the Cathedral is a boat, constructed by Dutch carpenters in 1668, sailing in which led Peter the Great to wish to have a navy.

At the end of the Nevski Prospect is the Nevski Monastery, one of the most celebrated in Russia. It contains in its vast area churches and towers as well as the cells of monks. It was founded by Peter the Great in honour of Alexander Nevski who defeated the Swedes on this spot in 1241, and whose remains were brought here with great pomp. In the Cathedral there is a massive silver shrine of the warrior, now regarded as a saint. At the head of the tomb is a silver lamp, always kept burning.

The Imperial Public Library is one of the richest in Europe, containing over a million printed volumes, and 25,000 manuscripts.

The principal streets of St. Petersburg present a very animated appearance. The number of soldiers is very striking. The garrison usually consists of 60,000 men, among whom are Tartars, Circassians, and Cossacks. Besides the soldiers, the police officers, professors and students all wear uniform. In summer, carriages have wheels; in winter, with snow on the ground, they are drawn as sledges. The drivers use sledges as long as a patch of snow is to be found in the streets. Sometimes a four-wheeled carriage may be seen rolling along in the dust on the sunny side of a street, while on the shady side sledges are still striving to get forward by means of the snow.



EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.'S SLEDGE.

In 1832 St. Petersburg, for the first time, suffered severely from cholera. The common people ignorantly thought that it was caused by the doctors who had poisoned those who were attacked by the disease. They seized the cholera carriages, made the patients whom they were conveying to the hospitals alight, unharnessed the horses, and broke the carriages in pieces. They then surrounded themselves with hay carts in the haymarket.

Next morning they forced their way into the great cholera hospital, flung one of the most active physicians out of the window, tore him in pieces, and turned all the patients out of the house. Presently the Emperor arrived, unattended in an open carriage. He proceeded directly to the door of the church at the edge of the market, ordered it to be opened, crossed himself, prayed, and then told the people to fall on their knees, to seek forgiveness from God for the sin they had committed, and to beseech Him in his mercy, soon to remove the fatal disorder from the city. "On your knees! on your knees!" cried the Emperor in a loud voice, standing up in his carriage, and the mob, before so furious, submissively obeyed.

The country around St. Petersburg and the island of the Neva are dotted with houses to which the city people resort during the summer. The population is then much smaller than in winter.

The Czar has several summer palaces in the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg. One of the principal is Peterhof, near Cronstadt. It stands on a terrace overlooking the sea. In a part of the grounds there is a small wooden house, from which Peter the Great used to watch the progress of his fleet and of the fort he was erecting on the opposite island to protect the mouth of the Neva from the Swedes.

NOVGOROD.

NOVGOROD (New Town) lies 110 miles south-east of St. Petersburg by rail. The Province includes part of the table land of Valdai, the highest central portion of European Russia. Lakes, swamps, and forests are its main features. Here the principal rivers of the country take their rise.

Novgorod is famous as the cradle of Russian history. About 862, according to tradition, Rurik made it his capital. The population increased, it is said, to about 4 lakhs. The city styled itself, "My Lord Novgorod the Great!" and chose for its motto, "Who can equal God and Great Novgorod?"

In Novgorod money was formed by the cutting of bits from a smooth piece of silver, and their value calculated by weight. The smaller parts were called *Obrubki*, cut off, and the larger ones *Roubli*, from which the word Rouble, the standard Russian coin, is derived.

The town is composed of two parts, divided by the river Volkhof. The names of the streets bear record to its past history. The Voloss street is so called from the heathen god Voloss. The Varangian street is in memory of Rurik, called a Varangian chief. The most ancient building in Novgorod, and probably the oldest church in Russia, is the Cathedral of St. Sophia, built in the 11th century somewhat on the model of St. Sophia at Constantinople.

Novgorod was virtually independent till it was taken in 1470 by Ivan III. Three hundred wag, on loads of gold, silver, and other valuables were taken to Moscow, and more than a thousand of its principal citizens were banished.

A hundred years later the city suffered dreadfully under Ivan the Terrible. For 5 weeks the inhabitants were slaughtered or thrown into the river. Sixty thousand are said to have perished.

In 1862 a splendid bronze monument was erected near the Cathedral to commemorate the thousandth anniversary of the existence of Russia.

Novgorod, in early times, was a great seat of trade. Its prosperity was first injured by Archangel on the White Sea, but the foundation of St. Petersburg was the chief cause of its decline. The population is now only about 17,000.

MOSCOW.

Moscow, the ancient capital, is regarded by the Russians with greater veneration than St. Petersburg. It is called "the Holy City," from the number of its churches, with golden silver and blue domes. When pilgrims come in sight of it, they prostrate themselves. Another epithet is, "Dear Mother Moscow."

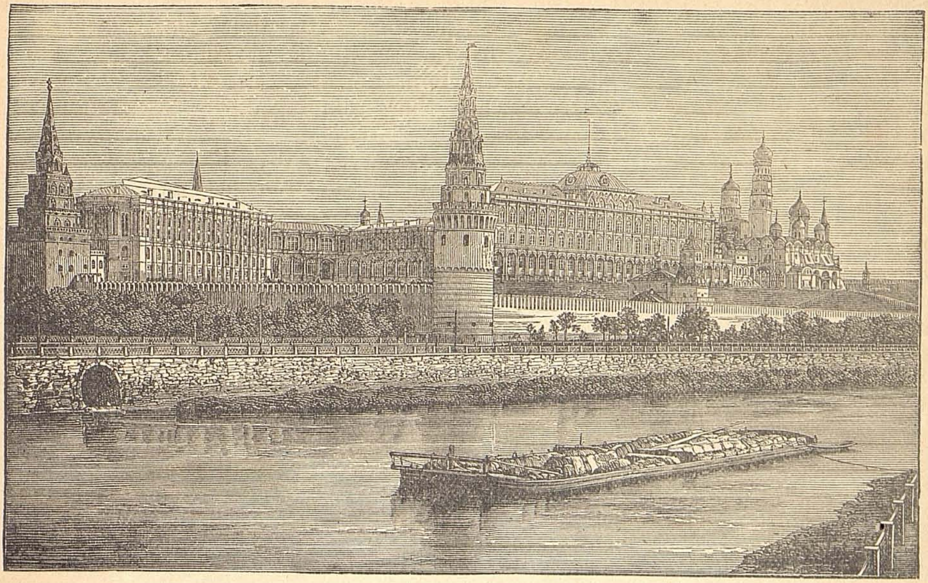
The city derives its name from a small river, called the Moskva, which winds through it like the letter S. It is mentioned as early as 1147 A.D. Prince George Dologouki is said to have made a clearing in the forest through which the river flowed, and built a city which in 200 years became the capital of the country under Ivan the First. This Ivan always carried a bag with him, filled with money to give to the poor. He surrounded the Kremlin, or citadel, with a wooden wall and a rampart of earth. About 1480 the present high stone wall and towers were erected.

Moscow suffered terribly at different times from Tartar invasions. In 1572 the suburbs were set on fire. A strong wind swept the flames over the city, and a lakh of persons perished either in their burning houses or by the swords of their enemies. Again in 1611, when it was held by the Poles, the greater part of it was destroyed by fire. In 1812 it was entered by the French army under Napoleon. He had invaded Russia with half a million of men, but only 120,000 reached Moscow. The weary soldiers saw it with shouts of joy, hoping there to rest from their toils, surrounded with plenty. On the very day that Napoleon made his triumphal entry into the city, it was set on fire by its inhabitants, and for three days the flames raged fiercely. After plundering what remained, the French army left; but winter coming on, great numbers perished from cold, and only about 10,000 returned to France.

Unlike St. Petersburg, Moscow is built on several low hills, the Kremlin occupying the highest. The area of the city is very large in proportion to the number of its inhabitants. It is about 9 miles in length and 6 in breadth, and its walls are more than 20 miles in extent. Within this space, however, there are parks and numerous gardens. The population is about 7½ lakhs.

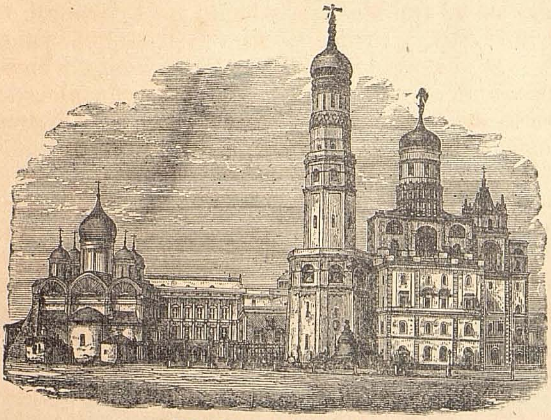
In another respect Moscow differs from St. Petersburg. The streets of the latter are straight; in Moscow one of that kind is scarcely to be seen. Besides winding like serpents, the streets rise and fall with the hills, so that, from time to time, a wide view is presented of a mass of trees with house tops, and coloured or gilded domes. Most of the houses are one or two stories in height, and usually painted yellow, red, or blue. The roofs, of tin or zinc, are mostly of a bright green. Outside the principal streets there are low wooden

houses, with compounds, gardens, and stables. There is no regularity in the buildings. A palace may have next to it a wooden hovel. As many of the people are unable to read, the shops have often pictures outside of the goods which they contain. The side paths consists of round stones, set in sand, sloping towards a central drain. Improvements are gradually being introduced. The principal streets are now traversed by tram cars.



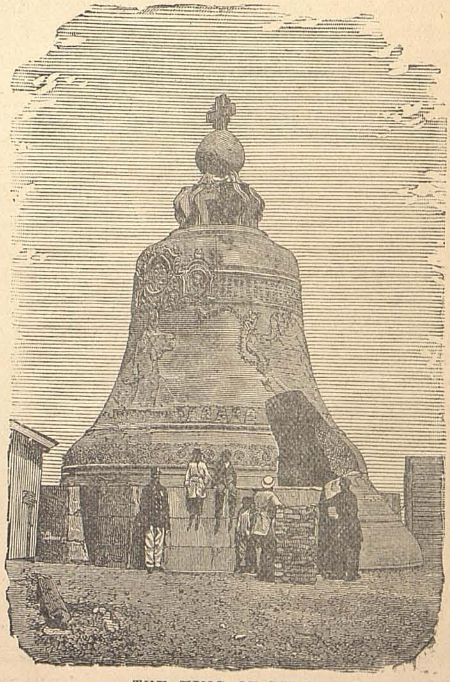
THE KREMLIN AS SEEN FROM THE RIVER.

The most interesting part of Moscow is the Kremlin, surrounded by a wall about 1½ miles in circumference, pierced by five gateways. Above one of the gates is a picture of Jesus Christ, which is much venerated. No one, not even the Emperor, can pass through it without uncovering the head. Before this picture criminals were allowed to make their last prayer. Over another gateway is a picture of St. Nicholas, to which also all who pass through uncover, from his supposed protection of the gateway which Napoleon sought to destroy.



THE TOWER OF IVAN.

The Kremlin is a collection of cathedrals, churches, palaces and public buildings. The large building to the right, with a flag staff on the top, is the great Palace. It stands on the

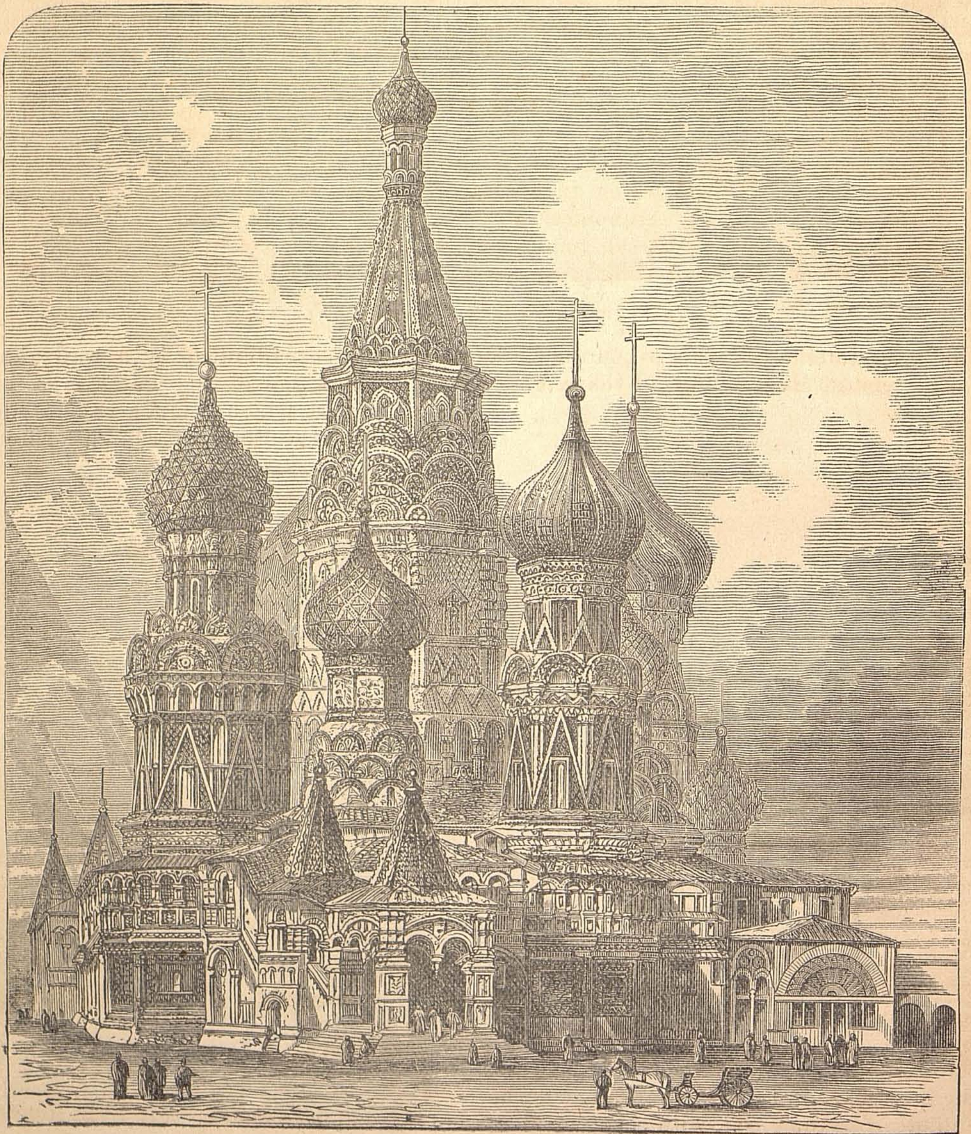


THE KING OF BELLS.

spot where the Moscow princes first built their houses of wood and afterwards of brick. The present palace was built by Nicholas to replace the one which the French had burned. It contains some splendid apartments, richly furnished. The drawing-room of the Empress is hung with white silk.

The Treasury, on the left of the Palace, contains many valuable and interesting objects. Here are displayed the standards of the different Czars; there are several thrones, amongst them that of Poland, and a Persian throne studded with diamonds, rubies, and pearls. Before some of the thrones there are little tables with crowns upon them. They are those worn by dead Emperors and Empresses. They are kept at Moscow, but they are taken to St. Petersburg when an Emperor dies, and are there displayed. On each throne is the initial of the Emperor or Empress whose it was.

The highest point of the Kremlin is the tower of Ivan Veliki, composed of five stories, rising 325 feet above the ground. It was built in 1600 by the usurper Boris Godounof, after the murder of the young Czar Demetrius, which is attributed to him. It is surmounted by a golden dome, and bears inscriptions in large golden letters. On the first view of it every Russian uncovers his head and crosses himself. Within the tower there are 33 bells



CATHEDRAL OF ST. BASIL.

hung at different heights. One of them, of enormous size, is the largest bell that strikes. It is used only on great festivals and the coronation of an emperor. Two silver bells occupy the highest story.

Near the foot of the Tower is the Great Bell of Moscow, supposed to be the largest in the world. It is 26 feet in height, 23 feet in diameter, and 2 feet thick. It is as large as a good-sized room. It was cast in 1733 out of the metal of a large ancient bell, but weakened by the jewels and other treasures which the ladies of Moscow had thrown into the melted metal. In 1733 a piece was broken out of its side by heavy rafters falling upon it. This piece weighs 11 tons. The weight of the whole is nearly 200 tons, equal to about 200 cart loads.

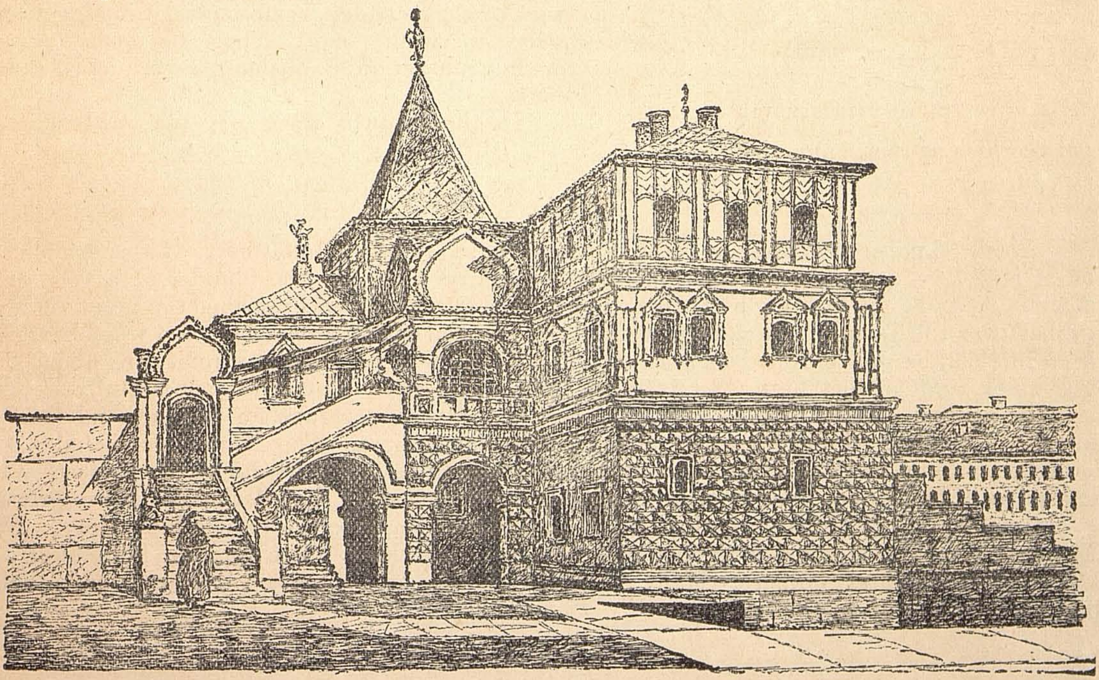
The cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin, in the centre of the Kremlin, is considered the most sacred spot in Russia. It was rebuilt in 1475, and is a white building with five gilt copper domes. The interior is full of tombs and pictures. In this cathedral Ivan the Terrible was reproved for his crimes by Archbishop Philip. The Archbishop was dragged from the altar, and driven out of the cathedral with brooms. After being confined in prison for a time, he was put to death. The Archbishop is now regarded as a saint by Ivan's successors.

In this cathedral the Czars have been crowned from Ivan the Terrible in 1533 to the present time. With seclusion and fasting the Czar prepares for this grand occasion. No one is allowed to take any part in the ceremony. The Czar kneels alone before the multitude in prayer, and then, with his own hands, places the imperial crown upon his head.

The cathedral of St. Basil was built by Ivan the Terrible to commemorate the conquest of Kazan. It was afterwards destroyed by fire, but rebuilt according to the original design. It has now 11 domes, each different in colour and design, rising above 18 chapels, connected by winding passages. Basil was a hermit who wandered through the streets of Moscow with a heavy iron chain. He was buried in the new cathedral, which is now called after his name.

In the cathedral of the Archangel Michael, lie, each in his place, their coffins ranged round the wall, 45 Czars, from the founder of Moscow to the predecessor of Peter the Great. Round the walls, above each coffin, are the figures painted in long white robes, each with a glory round his head. Twice a year a service is performed for the sins of all of them. Nearest the altar is the coffin of Ivan the Terrible, covered with a black cloth, on account of the blood-thirsty monarch becoming a monk half an hour before his death.

The part of Moscow east of the Kremlin is called Kitai-Gorod.



THE ROMANOFF HOUSE.

The Romanoff House is in the Kitai Gorod. It is said that Michael Romanoff, the first Czar of the present line, was born on this spot in a house of the same kind, only the

walls are ancient. It was burnt and sacked by the French in 1812, and rebuilt in 1859 in the style of Russian dwellings of the 16th century.

The University of Moscow, the oldest in Russia proper, was founded in 1755 by the Empress Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great. It has about 70 professors and upwards of 3,000 students.

A Museum shows the different stages of the Russian people from the earliest ages to modern times. It begins with stone implements and models of ancient graves. Savage man is seen attacking a mammoth with stones and sticks. Next a chief is seen lying dead, with his wives, horses, and dogs being slaughtered to accompany him to another world. In the third room hideous idols are exhibited. The gradual introduction of Christianity is afterwards shown.

RUSSIAN TRADER WITH SAMOVAR ON TABLE.

There are shops in which vodka is sold, where a peasant drinks glass after glass of the spirit till his money is finished. But the tea houses are much more numerous. They abound in every street and lane of the city. Enter one of them at any hour of the day, they are always crowded. In one corner there is a picture of a saint. When a Russian enters, he uncovers his head and bows to the saint, and calls for his portion. The tea is served in a small tea-pot; hot water is supplied from the *samovar*. The tea is sipped from the saucer, which is held on the tips of the fingers of the left hand. The right hand often holds a lump of sugar, from which a bit is taken and held between the teeth, while the tea is sucked through it. Sometimes a slice of lemon is used instead of sugar. The middle and upper classes take tea twice or thrice a day, sometimes consuming from twelve to twenty cups. These tea houses serve for the transaction of business as well as refreshment.

In the suburbs there are tea gardens and parks which attract many visitors.

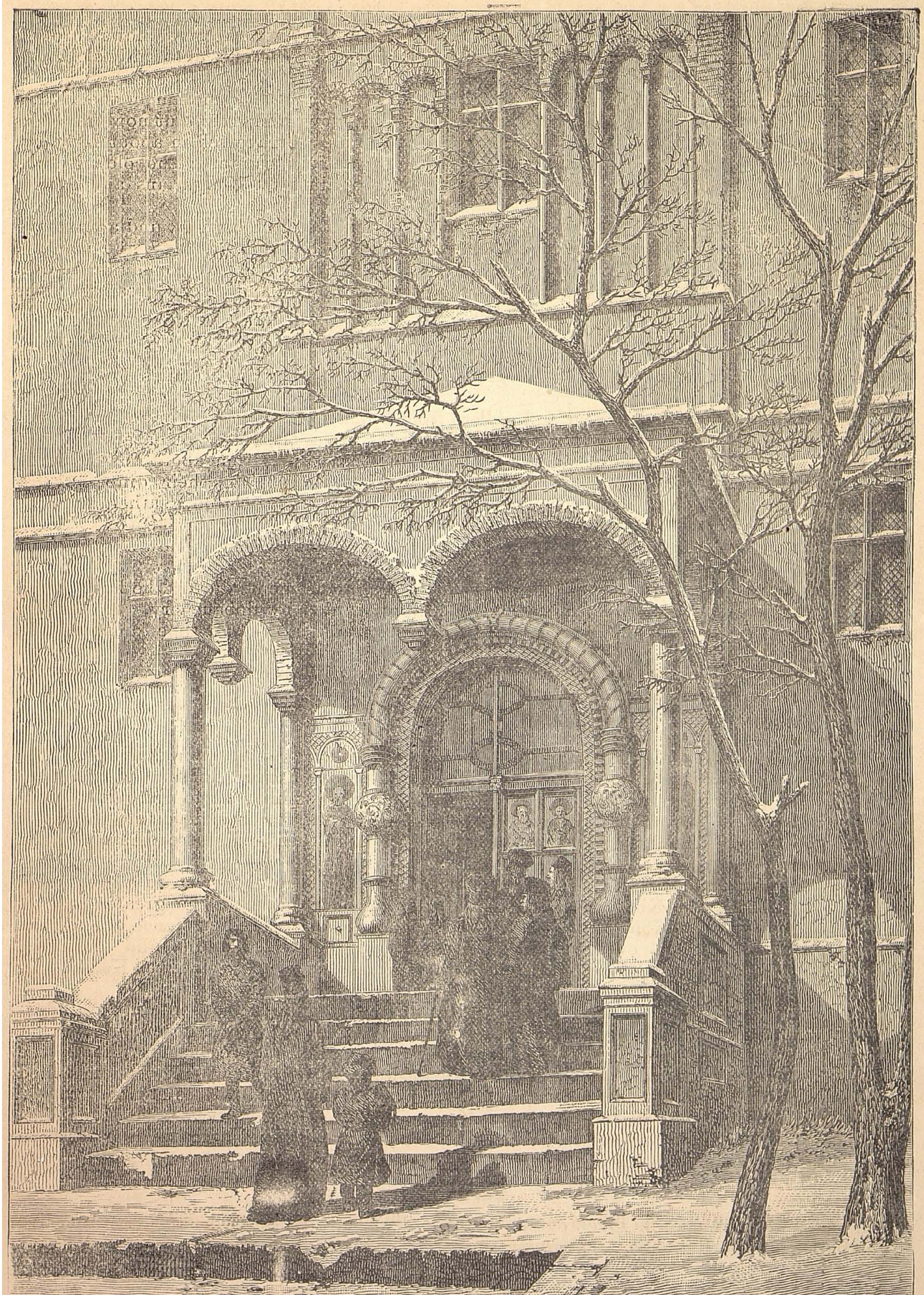
The Troitsa Monastery.

About 36 miles from Moscow is the famous Troitsa (Trinity) Monastery. It was established in 1342 by a hermit, named Sergius, whose sanctity made him the founder of a religious community. To the blessing he bestowed on Prince Demetrius, was ascribed the great victory gained over the Tartars. Rich gifts were then showered on the Monastery, and when Sergius died in 1392, he was enrolled as a saint. The walls, nearly a mile in circuit, are about 20 feet thick, and 50 feet high. In 1608 the monks defended themselves successfully for 16 months against 30,000 Poles. The Monastery was always a refuge for the Imperial family in time of danger. Twice Peter the Great found shelter here. The Monastery includes 12 churches, an imperial palace, and numerous other buildings. The wealth of the Monastery is enormous. The Abbot lives in princely grandeur, supported by the offerings of the pilgrims.

Innumerable pilgrims from all parts of the Empire stream to the Troitsa Monastery. No Emperor comes to Moscow without paying his devotions there. The terrible Ivan built at least half of its stately edifices. Many of the first nobles of the present day have made their pilgrimage there on foot.

Down the Volga.

The Volga, the longest river in Europe, has a course of about 2300 miles. It is about 700 miles longer than the Ganges. It rises on the south-eastern slope of the Valdai Hills, 550 feet above the level of the sea. It first flows through several small lakes, and



ENTRANCE TO THE TROITSA MONASTERY.

swampy lowlands, covered with forest, and becomes navigable for small steamers at Tver, an ancient town, about 100 miles north-west of Moscow. Below Tver the river flows through green pastures and waving corn fields, the right bank rising sometimes into hilly slopes on which most of the cities stand.

Nijni Novgorod (Lower New-Town), is a celebrated city at the junction of the Oka, a large river, with the Volga. It may be reached by sailing down the river, but now travellers generally go by rail from Moscow. The distance of 270 miles is traversed in about 13 hours. It is called Nijni Novgorod to distinguish it from the ancient capital. The old city was founded in 1219 by the Prince of Suzdal, as a defence against the Bulgarians and others. Five times it was taken by the Tartars.

The city consists of two parts. The Upper City is built on the high ground around the Kremlin, above the Volga. It includes a cathedral, originally built in 1227, and many of the churches. The Lower City is on the right bank of the Oka. The two communicate by a bridge of boats. Nijni Novgorod is chiefly remarkable for its fair, once the greatest in the world. It is held on a large sandy tongue of land between the Volga and the Oka, each of which is here a quarter of a mile wide, and lasts for 8 weeks from the 1st of July. It dates from the ninth century, but its site has been four times changed. It was removed by the Emperor Alexander I. to Nijni Novgorod in 1818 from Makarief, 50 miles lower down, in consequence of a fire.

The fair brings together buyers and sellers from China to Germany. For their convenience there is an immense market hall, with 60 blocks of stone buildings for bazars, containing more than 2500 apartments. The population then increases from about 60,000 to 2½ lakhs. Traders are to be seen from various countries, dressed in their different costumes. Wares of all kinds are crowded together; timber, sugar, cotton, leather, and furs from Siberia; tea from China; silks and carpets from Persia; iron from the Ural. Until 1856 all the tea imported into Russia was brought from China overland; now a good deal of it comes by sea.

Like Indian melas, Nijni Novgorod has abundance of amusements during the fair; eating and drinking, theatres, music and dancing halls, accompanied by debauchery. A traveller says, "There is no viler hell upon earth than Nijni Novgorod in the fair time for those who choose to make it so."

With the extension of railways, the importance of the fair is declining. People can now purchase goods nearer home.

Kazan.

Kazan is near the Volga, about 200 miles below Nijni-Novgorod. It was anciently the capital of the Tartar kingdom, and still contains about 10,000 Tartars. Tartar is corrupted from Tatar. When news of the ravages of the Tartars was brought to Europe, a pious king exclaimed with horror: "Well may they be called Tartars, for their deeds are worthy of fiends from Tartarus (hell)." The name was first given to the Mongols from Eastern Asia, but it was afterwards applied to several races.

Genghis Khan, the Mongol, in the early part of the 13th century, ravaged a great part of Asia. In 1237, Batu Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan, conquered the greater part of Russia, and was the first Khan of the Golden Horde. After a troubled existence of less than a century, his dynasty was overthrown by Timur, who also invaded India, and plundered Delhi. On the ruins of the Golden Horde arose new Khanates, one of which was Kazan. In 1552 the Russians, under Ivan the Terrible, took Kazan after a bloody siege.

The city contains within the fort a cathedral which is supposed to contain a wonder-working *ikon* of the Virgin Mary. Besides 50 churches, there are about a dozen mosques. A town is greatly reverenced by the Tartars. It is supposed to have been originally the minaret of the mosque in which the Khans of Kazan were buried, but which was demolished by Ivan. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, Tartars come to pray on the sites of their graves.

Alexander I. founded the University of Kazan in 1804. It has about 1000 students, a library, museum, &c. are connected with it. Close to the town are the ship-building yards in which Peter the Great built his Caspian Sea fleet.

Tartars.

A short account may be given of this people. The Tartars are Muhammadans, and live quite apart from the Russians. The upper classes are many of them merchants, trading as far

TARTAR MERCHANTS.

as Bokhara, Persia, and Turkey. The poorer classes are horse-dealers or have the care of horses. The men shave their heads, and have scanty beards. The younger women paint their faces, blacken their teeth, eyebrows, and eyelids, and dye their nails with henna. A Tartar house is divided into two parts, the front and the back; between which runs a passage where prayers are conducted. The male and female apartments are separate. Along the walls are wide wooden benches. On the edge of the stove stand two iron or brass water pots, one for the men, the other for the women. Some chests and rugs make up the furniture.

The Tartars are very hospitable. In tea drinking they said to surpass even the Russian merchants.

A TARTAR LADY OF THE VOLGA.

Marriages are conducted by female agents. A man is forbidden by law to see his wife before marriage. Neither the bridegroom nor the bride take part in the marriage ceremonies, which are celebrated by the Mollah in the presence of their relations and friends. When a Tartar falls dangerously ill, the Mollah, or some other person in his absence, reads the chapter of the Koran about the resurrection of the dead. The dead are not allowed to remain unburied more than 12 hours, and during that period the relations of the deceased abstain from food and drink.

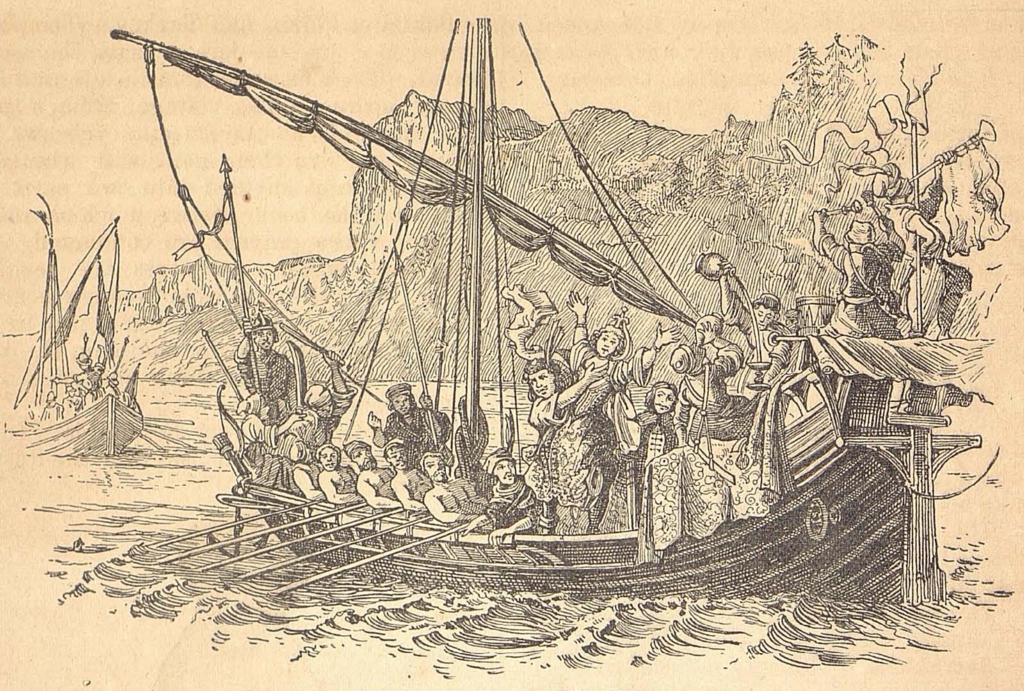
About 50 miles below Kazan, the Volga receives on its eastern bank, the Kama, its principal tributary. The Kama is 1160 miles in length, and brings to the Volga a large number of vessels and rafts laden with salt, iron, and other produce from Siberia.

The river now flows through a rich grain country. Formerly it was sometimes raided by pirates, as represented in the picture on the next page, who plundered both ships and towns, carrying away people to be sold as slaves.

Samara is an important commercial city, lower down the river. It is connected by rail on the one hand with Moscow, and on the other with Orenburg on the river Ural. Much of the trade of Russia with Central Asia passes through it. Samara is noted for its *Kumiss*, or fermented mare's milk, which has the reputation of curing certain diseases. It is also the favourite drink of the people.

Near Syzran, below Samara, the Volga is crossed by a railway bridge, which enable trains to run uninterruptedly from St. Petersburg to Orenburg.

Saratof is a flourishing town with a great trade in grain, lower down the river. Around it and for some distance down the river, there are settlements of German colonists. In 1763



ANCIENT PIRATES ON THE VOLGA.

the Empress Catherine gave a number of foreigners permission to found colonies, which have prospered greatly from good management. They have introduced a better system of cultivation, planted orchards, and vineyards. It was thought that the Russians would adopt improved methods from them; but they go on precisely as before.

At **Sarepta**, still farther down, some German missionaries formed a colony, mainly with a view to the conversion of the Kalmuck Tartars. They studied the Kalmuck language and translated the New Testament into it. The first efforts of the Missionaries were successful; but in 1815 they were forbidden by the Russian Government to preach to the Kalmucks, and such of the Kalmucks as had embraced Christianity were reckoned as belonging to the Russian Church.

The Kalmucks.

The Kalmucks are a Mongolian race, inhabiting the plains on the lower course of the Volga, and found also in Asia. They are not settled, but form wandering villages, living in tents. They are of middle height, and have straight black hair, small narrow eyes, flat noses, high cheekbones and large ears. Their skin is yellow, and often they are very dirty. The dress consists of a shirt, a wide pair of trousers, red leather boots, a square cloth cap, with a broad border of sheepskin fur, generally ornamented with a large knob on the top. The women do not, like the men, wear a belt round their shirt. Their hair falls from beneath their cap in several plaits, tied up with ribbons of different colours. During the heat of summer children of both sexes, up to the age of ten, run about nearly naked. In winter, during terrible snow storms, they remain for days together huddled up in their tents, beneath heaps of their clothing.

A KALMUCK WOMAN.

Boiled flour, diluted with water and cooked with pieces of horse flesh, forms their chief food. They are fond of tea, and drink a great deal of it, but season it so highly that it entirely loses its flavour. They are

great drunkards, in this respect the women and children equalling the men. They sometimes spend whole days in gambling with greasycards.

The Kalmucks are excellent horsemen. They also breed camels for sale.

The Kalmucks have the same idea about prayer as the people of Tibet. They suppose that turning round a written prayer is equal to its repetition. At the entrance of every tent, there is a contrivance like a windmill, on which there are prayers inscribed by the priest. When the wind sets the sails in motion, the prayers are supposed to rise to heaven for the benefit of the family. The priests who have to pray for the whole village do it as follows. The prayers are put into a wooden cylinder. The priest sitting down beside it, leisurely turns the cylinder with one hand, whilst he holds his pipe in the other.

Lower Course of the Volga.

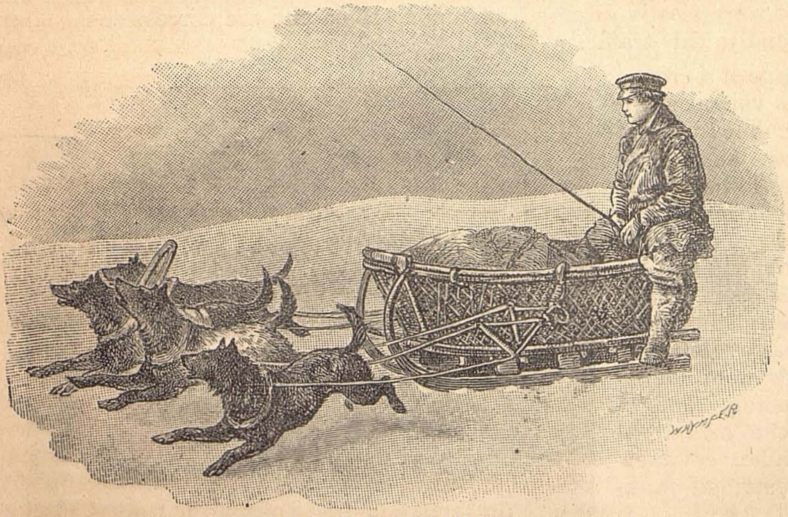
During part of its lower course, the Volga traverses desert plains, some of them containing salt lakes. The largest of them, like Sambhar Lake in Rajputana, yields every year about 100,000 tons of salt. Wild animals are the only inhabitants of these plains, which in summer are swept by dust storms and in winter by drifting snow. In some parts the Volga, like the Indus, is shallow; in others, very deep. The bed of the river is always changing, new sand-banks being formed.

There are about 600 steamers, besides many sailing vessels, on the Volga, and its tributaries. By means of canals it is connected with the Baltic and the White Sea. The river is closed nearly half the year by ice. Goods are then drawn on sledges.

The Volga forms a large delta like the Ganges, through which it pours its waters into the Caspian Sea by more than 70 mouths.

Astrakhan.—This city is situated on an island of the Volga, 41 miles from its mouth. The Kremlin and White town alone have houses of stone; the suburbs contain only wooden buildings, and irregular, dirty, unpaved streets. A canal runs through the middle of the city. The markets attract thousands of merchants from the surrounding countries; steamers connect the city with all parts of the Caspian.

Astrakhan is the chief seat of the sturgeon fishery, both in the Volga and in the Caspian Sea. Many thousands of people thus find employment. The sturgeon, though usually much smaller, sometimes reaches the length of 19 feet, and weighs more than a thousand pounds. The flesh is eaten, both fresh and salted. The roe is made into caviare. A fine kind of glue, called isinglass, is made from the air bladder.



ASTRAKHAN FISH SLEDGE.

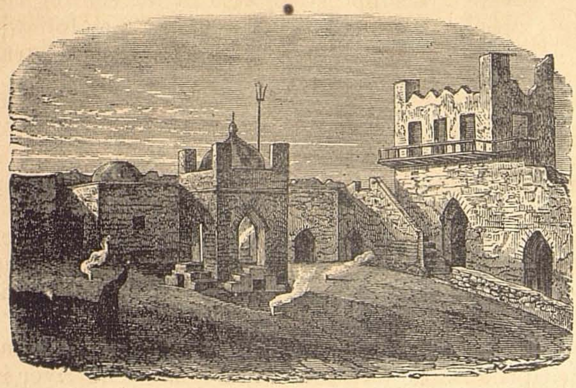
A smaller kind of sturgeon, called the sterlet, is still more valued. No great feast in Russia is considered complete without sterlet soup. The fish is sometimes taken alive to St. Petersburg in Volga water, where a large fish may bring Rs. 300. During winter the fish are sent up-country in a frozen state. Fish sledges drawn by dogs are sometimes employed. The population of Astrakhan is about 75,000.

Caucasia.

Caucasia is a Russian Province, between the Black Sea and the Caspian, traversed by the Caucasus Mountains, the highest in Europe. It contains about 180,000 square miles, with a population of about 7½ millions.

Six of the peaks of the Caucasus exceed the highest Alps. Mount Elburz, the loftiest

peak, is 18,000 feet above sea level. The north-western part of the range was inhabited by a tribe, usually called Circassians, noted for their love of independence. Under a chief, named Schamyl, they resisted the power of Russia for 30 years. Schamyl was at last taken; but he was pensioned, and allowed to go to Medina, where he died. Many of the Circassians, when the Russians conquered the country, moved into Turkey. The Circassian women are noted for their beauty. For generations they were sold for the harems of wealthy Turks.


BAKU.

Baku.—This is a seaport on the Caspian, which has long been considered a sacred city by the Parsis on account of its ever-burning fires. Kerosine oil is now well-known in India. The country around Baku is impregnated with it. When a well is dug, the oil gushes out,—in some cases rising to a great height. When heated, it is changed into a kind of gas which burns. In the fire temple at Baku some of the gas is constantly burning.

The fine oil is used for lamps; the refuse, thick like tar, is employed as fuel on board the Volga and Caspian steamers. As Baku is inland on the Caspian, ships cannot come to it from other countries. A pipe, 600 miles long, has therefore been laid between Baku and Batum, a port on the Black Sea, for the conveyance of kerosine oil. From Batum it is taken in ships, with large tanks, to India and elsewhere.

Erivan is the chief town in Russian Armenia; **Kars**, to the north-west, was taken from the Turks in 1872.

Georgia.—Georgia anciently formed a separate kingdom to the south of the Caucasus range; but it suffered terribly at times from Tartar and Persian invasions. In 1799 one of the kings resigned the crown in favour of the Emperor of Russia. Like the Circassians, the Georgians are noted for their beauty, and under the Muhammadan rule the white slaves of Western Asia and of Egypt were mostly drawn from among them and the Circassians. The Russians sought to put an end to this traffic.

A head band, in the shape of a crown, and from which hangs a veil passing under the chin, forms the headdress of the Georgian women. Two long plaits of hair fall behind, reaching nearly to their feet. A long bright-coloured ribbon serves as a sash, and falls down the front of their dress to the ground. Out of doors they wrap themselves up in a flowing white robe, which shields them from the sun. The men are also generally handsome. They wear rich embroidered dresses, and are passionately fond of horses. Notwithstanding the brutal oppression of their Muhammadan conquerors, the Georgians have remained faithful to the Greek Church.

ARMENIAN WOMAN AND CRADLE.

Tiflis, on the river Kur, is the capital of Trans-Caucasia, the country south of the Caucasus. If contains many Armenians, who somewhat resemble the Georgians, and like them are Christians.

Batum is a small seaport on the eastern shore of the Black Sea, 575 miles from Baku, with which it is connected by rail.

Cossacks.

The Sea of Azof is a shallow sea to the north of the Black Sea, with which it is connected by the Strait of Yenekale. The largest river which flows into it is the Don, about a thousand miles in length. The lower course of the Don is partly peopled by a mixed race, called *Cossacks*. Different explanations are given of their name. The Tartar word means "brave"; in Turkish, it is a "robber." But they are not confined to the course of the Don; they are numerous along the Dnieper, a river still larger than the Don, which enters the Black Sea. They are also found in other parts of Russia, and are supposed to number about 25 lakhs.

Formerly the Cossacks were chiefly employed in defending the Russian frontier from Tartar or Turkish invasion. But their great object was to enrich themselves. When a favourable opportunity presented itself, they would rob those they were supposed to protect. At times they organised great plundering expeditions up the Volga.

At present the Cossacks form the irregular cavalry of the Russian army. They hold a large quantity of land, and are exempted from all direct taxation. In return, they are obliged to equip themselves and to serve wherever they are required. In time of peace most of them are allowed to remain at home, and have to turn out merely for a short time in summer. They employ themselves in fishing, cattle breeding, and other industries.

The Cossacks are noted for some of their feats of horsemanship. Setting their horses at full gallop, they will stand on the saddle and fire all round at an imaginary enemy; or sitting astride facing the horse's tail they will keep up a rapid fire. They will throw their hat and rifle on the ground, wheel, and pick them up whilst going at the horse's fullest speed.

A large number, however, are constantly required for active service. They are to be found in all parts of the Empire, from Russian Poland to Eastern Siberia. In the Asiatic Provinces they are invaluable. They can endure fatigue and suffer privations which would soon disable ordinary troops. When placed in some distant Asiatic frontier, they build their own houses, raise crops of grain, and live as colonists, without neglecting their military duties. If they require cattle, they find them in one quarter or another, just as their ancestors did centuries ago.

Some of the Cossacks compare favourably with ordinary Russians in respect of cleanliness and general character.

The chief of the Cossacks is called *ataman*. The title is now made hereditary in the eldest son of the Czar.

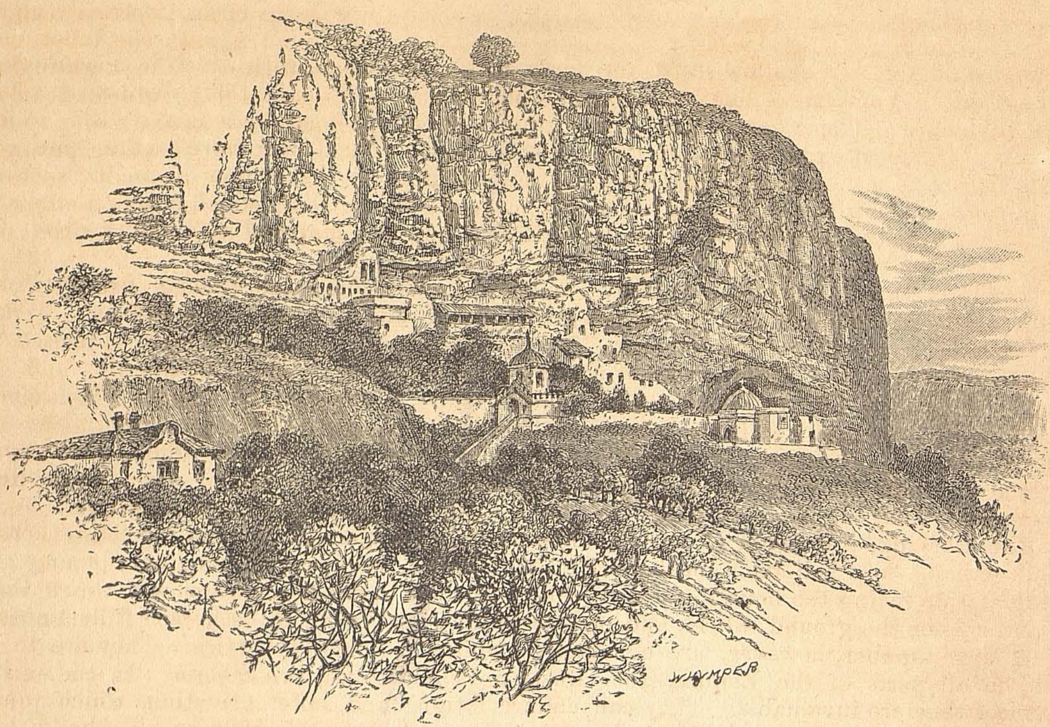
The Crimea.

The Crimea is a peninsula of South Russia, between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof. The isthmus of Perekop, connecting it with the mainland, is in one part only about 5 miles in breadth. Most of the peninsula is a continuation of the Russian steppes, but in the south there is a mountain chain, terminating in abrupt precipices on the coast.

The Crimea was for a time under a Tartar Khan, and Tartars are still numerous. Bakhchisarai (the town of gardens) was the capital. They are not so strict as some other Muhammadans. The women do not wear the veil. When a Tartar is engaged to be married, he goes about for three days with his face concealed by a handkerchief, for he is a man "with shame;" while the bride remains for the same period screened off in a darkened room. When the bride alights at door of her future home, she is seized by a crowd of women, dragged into the house, and delivered to the bridegroom.

Crimean War.—For 40 years there had been peace in Europe. Nicholas, Emperor of Russia, had long coveted Constantinople. As early as 1844 he had proposed to divide with Britain and France the inheritance of the "sick man," as he called Turkey. In 1853 he took possession of part of Turkey. As he would not retire, England and France agreed to support Turkey, and war was proclaimed in 1854. Its chief feature was the siege of Sebastopol, a fortified harbour in the south of the Crimea; but several battles were fought in the neighbourhood.

The battle of Balaklava was memorable for the charge of the Light Brigade, who, through a mistaken order, rode a mile and a half under a murderous fire from the Russians. Out of the 600, not 200 returned. Inkermann was fought on a dark drizzly winter's day, when 8,000 British had to engage for several hours six times as many Russians, till 6,000 French came up to their assistance, and the Russians were routed.



INKERMANN.

The English troops suffered dreadfully from insufficient supplies and the severity of the weather. Miss Florence Nightingale devoted herself to the care of the soldiers in military hospitals, and secured their permanent improvement.

The Emperor Nicholas died in March 1856. The siege continued till the 8th September, when the fort, defending Sabastopol, was taken, and the Russians evacuated the city. In March 1856, a treaty of peace was signed at Paris.

South Russia.

This has already been partly described under the Cossacks, some of its principal inhabitants. To the north of it is a division sometimes called Little Russia, but it has no fixed boundaries.

The south of the country consists chiefly of *steppes*, treeless plains, covered with grass in spring, but deserts during the hot season. Northward there is a broad tract, stretching across the country, of rich black soil. In winter the climate is severe. Fierce east winds drive clouds of snow across the frozen plains, and almost cover the houses where it drifts. In March the cries of birds of passage fill the air. In June bright flowers are seen everywhere, and the air is sweet with their perfume. Then comes the hay harvest, followed by the grain harvest, which is over by September. In November low heavy clouds settle on the plains, obscuring the sun, and birds of passage take their flight back to the south.

The Little Russians are taller and finer-featured than the Great Russians. They have the habit of shaving the hair off the lower part of the head, and of letting the rest grow in a long thick tuft, which either falls loose about the ears or is plaited and wound round the head. Hence they are nick-named "tuft." A love of cleanliness and order distinguishes the Little Russians. Instead of log huts full of vermin and cockroaches, they have neat whitewashed cottages, surrounded by gardens. A peasant's house usually contains a sleeping room, filled up by a huge bed and a large iron-bound chest, containing the clothes of the family. The tables and benches of the living room are kept well scrubbed, and there is a good array of glass and crockery.

The joint family system of the north does not prevail in South Russia. The position of the women is much superior. Young people are allowed to manage their own love affairs, and a young man on marrying always leaves his father's house and has a home of his own.

A SOUTH RUSSIAN WOMAN.

Song birds, especially nightingales, frequent the topes near the villages. The nightingales are so highly esteemed that Russian merchants will pay Rs. 120 or Rs. 150 for a fine specimen. A stork may often be seen on the roof of a house, standing on one of its long legs by the side of the nest. A few of the principal places may be noticed.

Odessa, on the Black Sea, is the fourth city of Russia in point of population, and the second port. The present city is modern. It is built facing the sea on low cliffs, with deep ravines. Galleries are hollowed out in the soft rock, in which numbers of the poorest inhabitants herd together. The streets are long and broad, crossing each other at right angles. There is a splendid harbour, rendered safe by a breakwater. It is closed by ice for only about a fortnight a year.

The city was formerly enveloped in clouds of dust, and almost without vegetation. It has now a good supply of water, brought from the Dnieper, 27 miles distant, affording water both for drinking purposes and for watering gardens of great beauty.

Odessa has increased rapidly in size from being the principal export town for the corn-growing districts of South Russia. About 1400 vessels enter the harbour every year, about one half of which are British. There is a University founded in 1865, with about 600 students. The population of Odessa in 1890 was 314,000.

Kherson is about 80 miles east of Odessa, on the Dnieper. John Howard, the great English philanthropist, was buried in a village about four miles north of Kherson. He went on horseback to visit a sick lady, but being lightly clothed, he caught cold, followed by fever. He died in 1790, in the 65th year of his age. According to his last wish, the monument over his grave is a block of marble, surmounted by a sundial.

Kharkof, 465 miles south-west of Moscow, is the principal seat of trade in South Russia. It has a University with 900 students. As it was an energetic centre of the Nihilist movement, it has been greatly crippled by the Russian Government as a seat of learning. The population in 1888 was 188,000.

Poltava, 88 miles south-west of Kharkof, is memorable as the place when Charles XII. of Sweden was defeated by Peter the Great in 1709. Charles XII., though suffering from a wound, was carried into the battle in a dooly. Unable even to stand, he could only wave his sword. In two hours the Swedes were utterly routed, and Charles, with only a few hundreds, escaped into the Turkish territory. The centre of the battle-field is marked by a mound which covers the remains of the slain. Two monuments commemorate the victory.

Kief stands on the high right bank of the Dnieper, 381 miles north of Odessa. It is called the "Mother of Russian Cities." It was planted by Northmen on their way to Constantinople which they reached by descending the Dnieper. In 882 A. D. it was made the capital of the Russian principality, and continued so till 1169. Here, about 988, Vladimir ordered all the people to be baptized in the Dnieper. From this centre Christianity spread

gradually over Russia. The principal institution in the town is a famous monastery, which is visited every year by more than 25 lakhs of pilgrims. Underneath are a number of caves, containing the tombs of the chief Russian saints. The University had in 1883 about 1700 students. The city has in all nearly 70 churches, many of them with gilded domes and pinnacles, which, seen from a distance, give the city a striking appearance. The population in 1891 was 184,000.

West Russia.

West Russia includes what was called 'White Russia,' as distinguished from 'Great' and 'Little' Russia. It contains also a part of Lithuania, which, six centuries ago, was a Grand Duchy, independent both of Russia and Poland. Its first Grand Duke was Ringold, who ruled from 1235. His successors made successful conquests against the Russians. In 1368 these Grand Dukes became Kings of Poland, and in 1569 the two countries were united. When Poland was divided between Russia and Prussia, part of Lithuania fell to the former, part to the latter.

The Lithuanians are fair and well built, with fine features, and blue eyes. Agriculture, cattle-breeding, and bee-keeping are their principal occupations. The houses, built of wood thatched with straw, seldom provided with chimneys and seldomer still with glazed windows, are mostly squalid and dirty. Peasants of the better class, however, pride themselves on having a special guest chamber, with a clean bed, and adorned with numerous pictures of the saints.

The Lithuanian language, spoken by about 12 lakhs, is remarkable as coming nearer the Sanskrit than any other Aryan language. The people, though nominally belonging to the Roman Catholic or Greek churches, cling to many heathen customs. When any one is dying, all seed corn is removed from the house, under the belief that if it were there when the soul left the body, it would never grow. A hole is pierced in the wall above the sick man's head to give passage to his parting soul.

Parjanya was the god of thunder and lightning worshipped by the Aryans before Indra. The Sanskrit name means "showering." The name has been preserved by the Lithuanians. The god of thunder was called Perkunas, and the same word is still used in the sense of thunder. He was worshipped that they might have rain and fair weather at the proper time, and thunder and lightning should not injure them. He was probably the same as Peroun, whose image Vladimir threw into the river Dnieper.*

Kovno, in the north on the Niemen, was the last stronghold of heathenism in Europe. It held out there till the end of the 14th century. Ten miles beyond, a Roman Catholic church stands on the site of a sacred grove, within which a perpetual fire was maintained. Besides Perkunas, a sacred oak contained images of Petrimpa, the god of springs, sources and fertility, in the form of a beardless youth; and of Pikol, the moon-god having power over death and misfortune, and therefore represented as a grey-headed old man, deadly pale, with a white band round his head. Some of the sacred oaks could be seen 80 years ago in a neighbouring province.

In 1812, Kovno was plundered by the French. A monument in the market place says: "In 1812 Russia was invaded by an army numbering 700,000 men. The army recrossed the frontier numbering 70,000." Out of 800 cannon, only 9 were carried back by the French.

Vilna, 473 miles south-west of St. Petersburg, was made the capital of the Grand Duke of Lithuania in 1323. It was called "Little Paris," by the Lithuanians. This was also a centre of heathen fire-worship. The Jagellon Castle, of which an octagonal red brick tower still remains, crowns the hill at the foot of which a fire was kept constantly burning until the triumph of Christianity. A University was founded in Vilna in 1576, but it was abolished by the Russians in 1832.

Poland.

Poland derives its name from a word meaning *plain.* It forms part of the great European central plain, and is crossed by only a single range of hills. At one time it formed a kingdom as large as the Madras and Bombay Presidencies united. There are extensive barren tracts of sand, heath, and swamp, especially in the eastern districts; but much of the soil is fertile, and there are extensive forests. It is well watered by several large rivers. It is the only country in Europe where the bison is still found.

* Abridged from Max Müller's *India, what can it Teach us?* pp. 190-192.

POLISH PEASANTS.

The Poles are a branch of the Slavonic race, and their language differs but little from that of the Russians. Freedom from Tartar conquest and contact with Western civilization have so affected the national character that no union can be formed between the Poles and Russians.

While Poland was a kingdom, the people were divided into two great classes, as nobles and serfs. The serfs formed the agricultural labourers, and were attached to the soil. Their condition was very pitiable; they were left with the barest subsistence. The nobles were brave and hospitable, but quarrelsome. Such trade as the country had was mostly in the hands of the Germans and Jews.

The early history of Poland is uncertain. Tradition says that the Northmen descended on the Polish coast of the Baltic, and became, as in Russia, ancestors of noble houses. It is said that the first Grand Duke of Poland, (about 842 A.D.,) was Piastus, a peasant. Christianity was introduced by the fourth of the Piasts, 964 A.D., and it was a sovereign of the same house, Boleslas I., who enabled Poland to take rank as a European State. The last sovereign of the Piast line compelled his daughter to marry Jagellon, Duke of Lithuania, who offered to unite his large dominions with those of Poland, and to convert his heathen subjects to Christianity. Jagellon, baptised under the name of Ladislas, was elected to the throne of Poland, which thus become united with that of Lithuania in 1386. On the death, in 1572, of the last of the Jagellons, the crown was made elective.

One of the most celebrated of the later kings was John Sobieski, born in 1624. In early life he distinguished himself in the wars in which Poland was at that time almost constantly engaged against the Russians, the Tartars, and the Turks. In 1673 he was chosen king of Poland. Although he had given the Turks several defeats, they once more overran Hungary, and even laid siege to Vienna. With the aid of some German troops, the Turks received such a crushing defeat in 1683, that the siege was raised.

The Poles had a rule in their legislative assemblies which greatly contributed to the downfall of their country. Perfect unanimity was required. If a single person said, "I do not allow it," the most careful decision was rendered void.

The dissensions among the Polish nobles encouraged Russia, Prussia, and Austria in 1772 to seize a part of Poland. At the first partition Russia received 42,000 square miles, Prussia 13,000, and Austria, 27,000. The Poles sought to improve the government; but some of the nobles, dissatisfied, invited the Russians to enter the country. Under Kosciusko, the

Poles made a brave defence. They were, however, outnumbered, and Kosciusko, covered with wounds, fell into the hands of his enemies. A second partition took place in 1793, when Russia seized 96,000 square miles, and Prussia 22,000. Two years later, the third and last partition took place, Russia receiving 43,000 square miles, Prussia 21,000, and Austria 18,000.

Napoleon established in 1807 the Duchy of Warsaw, but it was short-lived. The division of Poland was rearranged in 1815, when Russia received 220,500 square miles, Prussia 26,000, and Austria, 35,500. Cracow, with a small surrounding territory, was declared independent under the protection of Austria. Part of Poland was formed into a kingdom, with the Czar as its sovereign. Alexander I. gave it a constitution, a separate army, and liberty of the press. An insurrection broke out in 1830, which was put down in 1831 after great bloodshed. The following year the kingdom was declared an integral part of the Russian empire, and its privileges were withdrawn. In 1848 the republic of Cracow was incorporated with Austria.

The last attempt of the Poles to regain their independence was made in 1863. With the assistance of Prussia, it was completely put down.

Since the rebellion of 1863, permission to practise a profession, or even to open a shop or to buy land is refused to all Poles who will not take an oath to join the Russian Church. The teaching of the Russian language is rigidly enforced in all primary schools; the teaching of Polish is as rigidly prohibited. To abolish the language it is made penal to use it in commercial transactions, and even in churches, and in the publication of newspapers and books. The press is under a severe censorship; only such journals and books are allowed to circulate, as have the approval of the Government. If a traveller wraps some articles in old newspapers, they are liable to be taken from him and examined.

A short account may now be given of the capital.

Warsaw stands on the left bank of the broad, but shallow, sandy Vistula. It was founded in the 12th century. In 1586 it replaced Cracow as the residence of the Polish kings. The city is built on the brow of a cliff, its streets, squares and gardens being disposed along it, and on the plains below. Across the river is the Prague suburb, formerly fortified. It has never recovered from the assault of the Russians in 1794, when its 16,000 inhabitants were all put to the sword. It is now deserted except by Jews.

The old town contains narrow, dark, crooked streets, in which palaces and ill-constructed houses of wood stand side by side. The new town has some fine broad streets, and wooden buildings are prohibited.

Among the many monuments in the square is a statue of Copernicus, who was a Pole. The Ptolemaic system, accepted before his time, taught that the heavenly bodies go round the earth. Copernicus showed that their motions are only apparent, and that the earth turns round. He died in 1543.

The people are mostly Roman Catholics. There are numerous statues of saints at the corners of streets and in front of the churches, decked with flowers, and with lamps burning before them.

The inhabitants are fond of amusement, and live much in the open air. In the town and neighbourhood there are numerous small gardens, where two or three musicians suffice to attract a crowd.

A few miles distant is the Castle of Villanov, built by John Sobieski, who died in it. Among other curiosities which it contains is a magnificent suit of armour presented by the Pope to Sobieski in memory of his great victory at Vienna.

The population of Warsaw in 1891 was 465,000.

Baltic Provinces.

The Baltic is a inland sea, considerably larger in area than the Madras Presidency. It is bordered by Russia, Sweden, Germany, and Denmark. It is comparatively shallow, and its water, colder and clearer than that of the ocean, contains only a fourth of the proportion of salt found in the Atlantic. Ice hinders its navigation three or four months a year, although the whole surface is rarely frozen over. Rocks and shoals, with sudden changes of wind, render its navigation dangerous.

The Baltic Provinces, strictly so called, are Courland, in the south, Livonia in the middle, and Esthonia in the north. They have an area of 36,500 square miles; and in 1882 a population of about 22 lakhs. They are sometimes called the German Provinces, because their

intellectual life is German, and their industries and commerce are chiefly in German hands. But the Germans form only about a sixth of the population, which is composed of Esthonians, Livonians, and Poles.

The Provinces were first seized by the Germans. Conquered by the Tartars, the Russians could not oust the invaders. The Germans tried to keep the science, art, and industry of Europe in their own hands. There was a struggle, lasting nearly 200 years, for these provinces, till they were finally gained by Russia.

Courland was formerly an independent duchy, and belonged, along with Livonia, to the Teutonic Knights. The difficulty of resisting the Russians led in 1561 to the acknowledgment of the sovereignty of Poland. For a long time, there were two factions, one Russian, the other Polish. In 1795 the province was united to Russia.

Courland is generally a level country, with many lakes, swamps, forests, and sand hills, but with some very fertile soil. The proprietors of land are mostly German; the peasantry are of Lettish extraction, resembling the Lithuanians.

Livonia, north of Courland, was, it is said, first brought to notice by the shipwreck of a German vessel at the mouth of the Düna about 1158 A. D. German traders found their way to the country, and before long reduced the nations to a state of vassalage. In 1190 the monk Meinhardt founded a monastery, and obtained permission to preach Christianity to the heathen Letts on the Düna. Meinhardt was the first bishop of Livonia. Albert the fourth Bishop, founded Riga. He also established an order of knighthood, called the Brethren of the Sword. The people were made to receive baptism, and were at the same time reduced to a condition of serfdom. In 1237 the Livonians rose in rebellion, and utterly defeated the Brethren of the Sword. The latter were afterwards reinforced by the Teutonic knights, but they were at last compelled to cede Esthonia to Sweden, Livonia to Poland, and the remaining districts to Russia. Esthonia and Livonia were finally surrendered by Sweden to Russia in 1721.

Livonia is mostly flat; about one-fourth of it is covered with forest; lakes and marshes are numerous. Letts and Esthonians form the bulk of the population. Only about 8 per cent are Germans, and 5 per cent Russians.

The people are chiefly Protestants of the Lutheran Church. They were guaranteed by treaty the exercise of the Protestant religion, the official use of the German language, and all ancient municipal rights and privileges. Notwithstanding these pledges, strenuous efforts have been made to "russify" the province.

Two of the principal towns may be noticed.

Riga.—The third Russian seaport, is situated near the mouth of the Düna, 350 miles south-west from St. Petersburg. The old town has narrow streets, with poor houses; the suburbs are laid out in broad streets, with handsome buildings. Nearly one-half of the population are Germans, one-fourth Russians, and one-fourth Letts. The port is closed for three or four months a year by ice. It is entered every year by a large number of ships. The population in 1888 was about 196,000.

The *Gulf of Riga* is a large inlet of the Baltic; sandbanks render the navigation in some parts dangerous.

Dorpat is in the north-east of Livonia. It is chiefly noted for its University, founded in 1632 by Gustavus Adolphus, and re-established by Alexander I. in 1802. Since 1887, it has been thoroughly Russianised. It has above 70 professors, and about 2,000 students. Dorpat is the centre from which German culture has radiated.

Esthonia, the most northerly of the Baltic Provinces, lies between Livonia and the Gulf of Finland. Much of the surface is covered with forests, moors, and small lakes. Agriculture is the chief occupation of the people. The bulk of the population consists of Esths, who are of Finnish descent, Turanians not Aryans. In spite of six centuries of slavery to their German lords, the Esths have largely retained their language and customs, which in some cases resemble those of Central Asia. Marriages are arranged by go-betweens, who visit the bride's house and make their proposals to her father, not directly, but by a metaphor. They represent themselves as come from the Czar who is searching for a pet lamb. If the father is favourable to the match, he invites the envoys to search for the lamb in his house, and drinks to their success. The young lady is discovered, and after she has drunk to their welcome, the bridegroom is allowed to visit her. On the wedding-day the processions of the bride and bridegroom go separately to church, halting on the way, wherever a lake, a well, or an old oak tree appears, to place presents for the good spirit. After the wedding,

the day is spent in feasting at the house of the bride's father. The carousals are carried on till early morning; when the bride, carefully veiled, is conducted to the bridegroom's house by his mother, who combs her hair and puts on a cap. In the morning she is led round the house, and begins her married life by cleaning out the stove.

Both men and women dress in black or dark brown woollen clothing of their own weaving.

Esthonia was seized by Peter the Great from Sweden in 1710, and formally annexed in 1721.

Revel, the capital of Esthonia, stands on a small bay on the south side of the Gulf of Finland. It was founded in 1219 by Waldemar II., of Denmark, and became a flourishing Hanse town. It is connected by rail with St. Petersburg, and has considerable trade.

Finland.

Finland is bounded on the south by the Gulf of Finland, and on the west by the Gulf of Bothnia, two arms of the Baltic Sea. It is about the size of the Madras Presidency, 140,000 square miles; but the population is only about 2 millions.

The word "Finn" means marsh or swamp. The Finlanders call themselves "inhabitants of the marshes," and their country, "land of lakes and marshes," or sometimes, "land of a thousand lakes."

Finland is a table land, about 400 feet above the sea. The land is rising about 3 feet in a century. The coast presents a succession of deep bays and rocky headlands. The interior is hollowed out into an endless succession of lakes and rivers. Lake Saima consists of 120 large lakes and thousands of smaller ones, all united, and flowing, by a foaming cataract, into Lake Ladoga. Lake Saima is also connected with the Gulf of Finland by a canal.

The winter is very cold, lasting six months even in the south; but the sea renders it less severe than in North Russia. In the north, during summer, the sun goes below the horizon only for an hour or two a day. From one place the sun can be seen at midnight, so that for a short time there is constant day. This shows that there is no Mount Meru as described in the Puranas. In the hot summer, grain may be sown and harvested in about six weeks.

More than half the country is covered with forest. Rye is the chief grain; next barley and oats. Wheat can be raised only in the extreme south. The potato, after rye, forms the chief food of the people. The pasturage is good, supporting, in considerable numbers, horses, cattle, and sheep. The rivers, lakes, and sea abound with fish, giving employment to many of the people. Fish form an important article of food. Large numbers are salted or smoked for the winter season.

The language of the Finlanders shows that they are not Aryans, like the Russians; but

FINLANDERS.

belong to the Turanian race, like the nations of South India. Nouns are not inflected, an additional word being used to denote the varieties of case, number, and sex. Prepositions are placed after the words they modify. The verbs have only a present and past tense, another word being required to indicate the future. While under Sweden, Swedish was the only literary language. By degrees the Finnish language was adopted in the law courts and in literature. It is now almost the ruling tongue.

The Finn peasants are generally of middle height, flat faced, with prominent cheek bones; the complexion is yellowish; the eyes are small and grey; the hair inclines to red; the beard is scanty, and generally close. The dress is a grey jacket, with brass buttons, or a long loose woollen coat, fastened round the waist with a silk girdle. The dress of the women is chiefly remarkable for the large number of metal buttons, rings, &c., with which it is adorned. A leathern strap, studded with yellow buttons, is often worn round the head. Their shirts are either striped with bright colours or are red. Red is the prevailing colour throughout the country. Smoking prevails largely. Every male, from the boy to the decrepid old man, has a blackened pipe, constantly in his mouth.

Butter, milk, potatoes, rye, and salt fish are the ordinary food. A kind of hard biscuit is baked a few times a year. A hole is bored through each biscuit, and the whole store is suspended by means of a cord from the ceiling of the room.

Every peasant, even the very poorest, can read and write. In Finland a drunken man or a beggar is very rarely to be seen. The people are upright, industrious, and religious. They are said to be self-willed, and, like the Hindus, litigious. Generally they are slow in their movements. They have a proverb, "Hurry only when catching fleas."

Finland, formerly under Sweden, was annexed to Russia in 1809. A promise was given to the inhabitants that their constitution, religion, and laws should be faithfully preserved.

The two chief towns may be briefly noticed.

Helsingfors, the capital of Finland, is a fortified seaport on the Gulf of Finland, nearly opposite Revel. The entrance to the harbour is protected by the strong fortifications of Sveaborg. It is a handsome town, the broad streets crossing each other at right angles, and there are several squares. The University was founded at Abo in 1640, but was removed to Helsingfors in 1828. It has about a thousand students. Helsingfors is a favourite bathing place; many visitors from St. Petersburg come to it during summer. The town was founded in its present site in 1639. It became the capital of Finland in 1819. The population in 1889 amounted to 65,000.

Abo, the old capital, is 170 miles north-west of Helsingfors near the Gulf of Bothnia. A great part of it was destroyed by fire in 1827 which led to the removal of the University to Helsingfors.

Northern Russia.

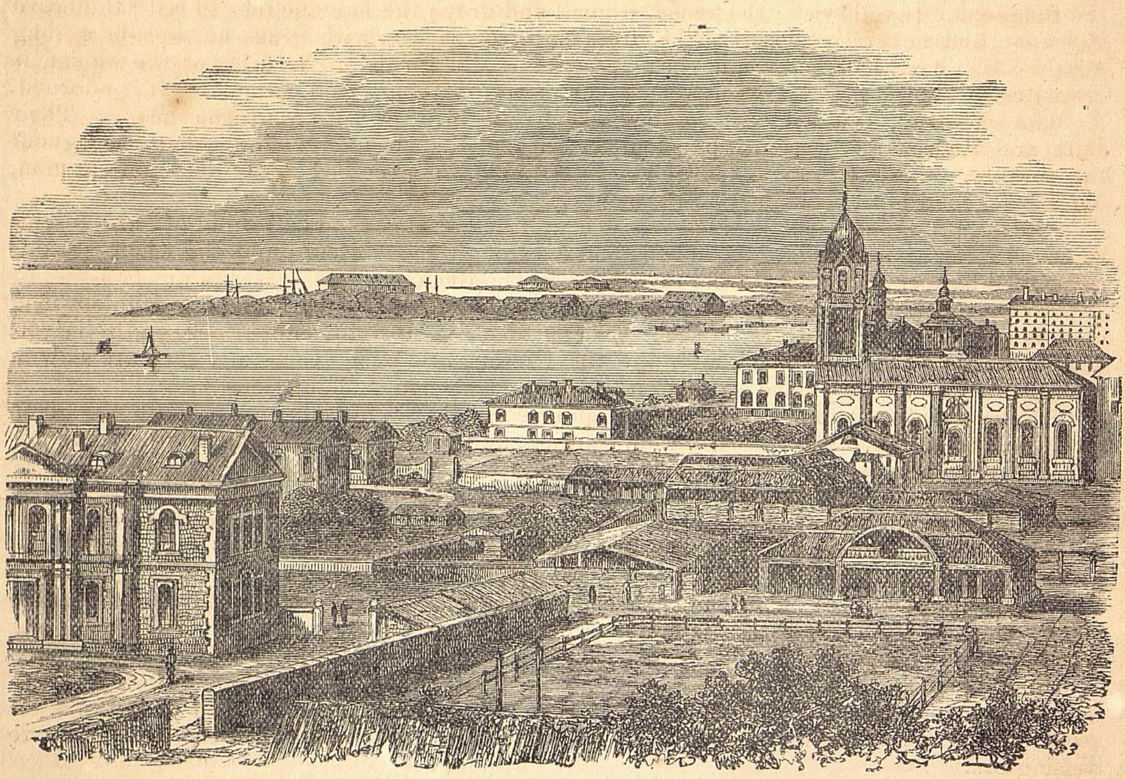
Northern Russia is bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean. A large gulf about twice the size of Ceylon, stretches inland, called the White Sea, because it is white with snow and ice the greater part of the year. The country is very barren. Grain can be cultivated only in a few places in the south: proceeding northward, the trees gradually diminish in size, and give place to low jungle which also disappears. Next there are extensive tracts, covered with thin grass, mosses, and plants yielding berries. Bordering on the ocean are what are called *tundras,* slightly undulating plains, full of lakes, swamps, and tracts covered with reindeer moss. In winter the tundras are frozen and covered with snow. In summer they are impassable to horses, though they may be traversed by reindeer.

The province of Archangel, twice the size of the Madras Presidency, contains only about 3½ lakhs of inhabitants. To the north-east there is a river, about 900 miles in length, called the Petchora. Along its entire course scarcely a village is to be seen.

The tribes inhabiting the shores of the White Sea were conquered by Novgorod the Great in the 11th century. The following century the Archbishop of Novgorod founded a monastery on the coast of the White Sea, dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel. In 1499 Ivan the Great, who had reduced Novgorod, took possession of her colonies, and made further conquests in Northern Russia.

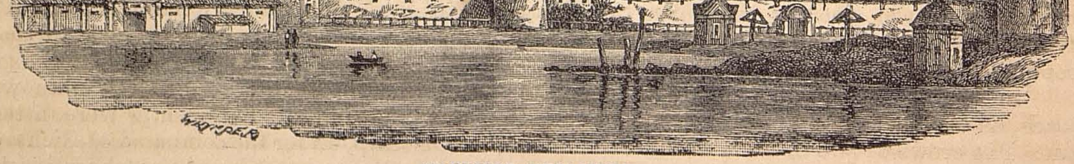
In the 16th century a company of merchants was formed in London to discover unknown lands, as well as to find a northern sea passage to China and India. Three ships were fitted out. The crews of two of them were frozen to death. One ship, under the command of Richard Chancellor, in 1553 cast anchor in the White Sea. There he learned that he had reached Russia

or "Muscovie." Edward VI., King of England, had given letters, asking that the merchants might be kindly treated. Chancellor and two companions were allowed to proceed to Moscow, where they were very kindly received by Ivan the Terrible. A treaty of commerce was concluded, and a Russian ambassador was sent to England. Ivan even desired to marry Queen Elizabeth, and asked her to allow persons skilled in ship-building to come to Russia. Trade thus sprung up between England and Russia, which has been continued to the present time.



ARCHANGEL.

Archangel is situated in the south of the White Sea, about 40 miles above its junction with the Dwina. It was formerly the only Russian seaport. In 1694 Peter the Great went to Archangel. He was delighted when he saw the ocean for the first time. Having engaged a crew and purchased a Dutch trading vessel, he went on board and sailed as far as Lapland.



SOLOVETSK MONASTERY.

At Archangel Peter went through all the gradations of a sailor's life. He acted as cabin boy, scrubbed the decks, climbed the masts, unfurled the sails, and steered the ship. To encourage St. Petersburg, Peter made the customs duties one-fourth higher at Archangel, which gave a great blow to its trade. Catherine, in 1762, repeated this regulation, and Archangel has increased in prosperity.

The houses are mostly built of wood. The town has several times been destroyed by fire. The chief exports are fish, timber, furs, tar, bristles, &c. The population is about 20,000.

Solovetsk Monastery.—Archangel is considered the water-gate to one of the holiest places in Russia, the Solovetsk Monastery, situated on an island, to the north-west, in the White Sea. About 10,000 pilgrims are taken there every year in a steamer manned by monks.

The monastery was founded in 1429; about a century later the churches were rebuilt of stone, and between 1590 and 1594 the monks enclosed them in a granite wall, supported by towers 30 feet high, and 20 feet thick. Deeming themselves secure, they refused in 1667 to receive the revised prayer book of Nicon. They broke into rebellion, and sustained a siege for 9 years. Overcome at last by treachery, many of the monks were put to the sword, and others were sent into exile.

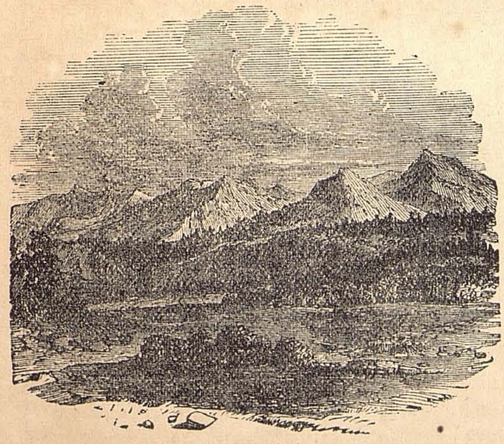
The monastery contains rich treasures in gold, silver, and precious stones, contributed by the Czars and nobles. In 1550, Ivan the Terrible presented priestly garments, ornamented with pearls of unusual size. Solovetsk was used as a political prison so recently as the reign of Nicholas.

Nova Zembla, (New Land) is a large island in the Northern Ocean, to the north-east. It is 600 miles long from north to south, and about 60 in average breadth. About midway it is nearly cut in two by a winding passage. Some parts are always covered with snow and ice. Although not permanently inhabited, it is visited by Russian and Norwegian seamen and hunters for the capture of the sea-fowl, whales, seals, and fish which frequent its coasts. It was known to the hunters of Novgorod in the 11th century.

There are other smaller islands in the Northern Ocean.

THE URAL MOUNTAINS.

Before describing Asiatic Russia, some account may be given of the Ural Mountains, forming part of the western boundary. The name is supposed to be derived from a Tartar word, meaning *belt*. On the mainland they extend from the Northern Ocean to Orenburg, a distance of about 1250 miles. But if Nova Zembla be considered a continuation of them, their length is much greater. The breadth varies considerably; in the widest part it is 116 miles. The loftiest summit is only 5397 feet above the sea.

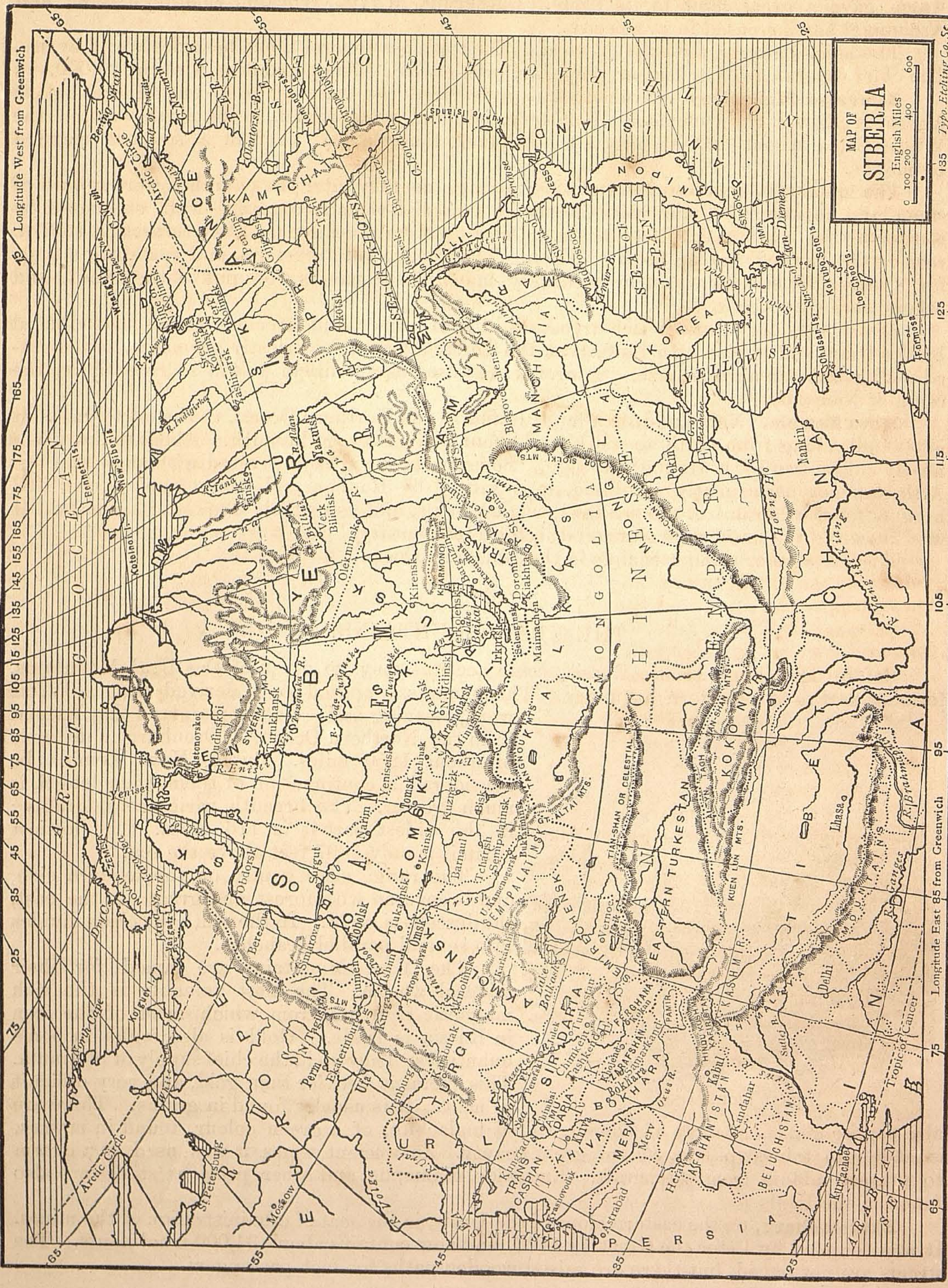

URAL MOUNTAINS.

The range rises gently on the western side, and is covered with forest and grass; to the east, the descent is rapid. In the south the chain divides into several parallel branches.

The Ural Mountains are famed for their mineral wealth. The most valuable is the rich magnetic iron ore, from which most of the iron in Russia is made. Gold is also found in some quantities. They yield the chief supply of platinum. This metal is heavier than gold, and very difficult to melt. It is usually found in grains. There are also copper mines. An ore of copper, called malachite, of a green colour, found in masses, is made into tables, pillars, &c., of great beauty. In ancient times it was used as a charm to protect infants from witchcraft. Emeralds, diamonds, and other precious stones are also found in the Urals.

Ekaterinburg, on the eastern slope of the Urals, is the seat of administration of the mines. It was founded by Peter the Great in 1723, and now contains about 34,000 inhabitants. The streets are not paved, but there are raised wooden paths for foot passengers.

On the summit of the chief pass of the Urals is an obelisk, erected to commemorate the conquest of Siberia by Yermack the Cossack in 1573, with the word "Europe" painted on the one side, and "Asia" on the other.



ASIATIC RUSSIA.

Russia in Asia contains about 6½ millions of square miles; but the population is only 18 millions. The principal divisions are SIBERIA in the north, RUSSIAN TURKISTAN in Central Asia, and TRANS-CAUCASIA, south of the Caucasus. The last has already been described; an account will now be given of the two former.

SIBERIA.

Siberia stretches across the entire north of Asia. The Ural Mountains form the western boundary, and the Altai Mountains part of the southern frontier. But the southern limit is uncertain, for Russian has been encroaching on the Chinese Empire, Turkistan, Afghanistan, and Persia. The most northerly point is Cape Severo or Tchelyuskin; the most easterly, East Cape. The area is nearly 5 millions of square miles—about one-fifth more than the whole of Europe. But the population is only about 5 millions. There is therefore only one person to the square mile, while India has 184. The name is said to be derived from *Sibir* on the Irtish, formerly the capital of a Tartar Khan.

Physical Features.—Siberia consist chiefly of a vast plain, rising very gradually from the Northern Ocean to the Altai Mountains; and it is traversed by the Obi, Yenisei, and Lena, which are among the largest and slowest rivers in the world. In the south-west there are sandy plains; the south-eastern districts are mountainous. Bielukha (White Mountain), a peak of the Altai Range, is about 11,000 feet in height. A continuation of the Altai chain extends to the eastern extremity of Asia.

The **Sea of Aral,** in the south-west, is as large as the island of Ceylon. It has no outlet, and its water is therefore brackish. It is generally shallow, and is dotted with multitudes of islands and islets; in the east it is a mere marshy swamp. Twice within historical times the bed of the sea has been dry land. It is now fed by the Syr-daria on the north-east, and the Amu-daria on the south-east. At different times these rivers ran into the Caspian Sea.

Balkash is a large lake, about one-third of the size of the Sea of Aral, to the eastward. Its water is clear, but very salt.

Baikal is a crescent-shaped lake in Eastern Siberia, the largest fresh-water lake in Asia. It is 330 miles in length, with a breadth varying from 9 to 40 miles. In some parts it is very deep. The water is remarkably clear. It abounds with fish. There are numerous hot springs on its shores, and earthquakes are frequent. The surface is frozen part of the year, but the traffic is carried on over the ice. Since 1846 there have been steamboats on the lake. The name means 'Rich Lake.' It is considered sacred, and called the Holy Sea. It is drained by the river Angara, a tributary of the Yenisei, and is surrounded by mountains occasionally rising to the height of 7,000 feet.

Climate.—Siberia is one of the coldest countries in the world. The north of it lies within the Frigid Zone. Piercing blasts sweep over the country from the Northern Ocean, and the ground is covered a great part of the year with snow. In June the Siberian winter breaks up. The snow disappears, and the plains are covered with wild flowers. Birds arrive in great numbers, but with them swarms of musquitoes which torment man and beast. About August the night frosts begin again, and in a few weeks the short Siberian summer is over. The climate is milder in the south than in the north.

Minerals.—Siberia is one of the richest countries for metals in the Old World, yielding gold, platinum, and iron.

Vegetation.—The marshy plains in the north, called *tundras,* are frozen for 9 months in the year. The centre consists of plains, some grassy, others salt deserts; in the south there are vast forests. Wheat is raised in some parts of the south; where it will not grow, barley will; and where barley will not grow, rye will.

Animals.—Siberia abounds with wild animals which are noted for their beautiful furs. The sable is a small animal, but its skin is worth about Rs. 100: a very fine one fetches three times that sum. To avoid injuring the fur, it is caught in traps or it is followed to its hole, over the mouth of which a net is placed. It preys on hares and smaller animals; it even catches birds among the branches of trees. Bears and wolves are the principal beasts of prey. Dogs and reindeer are the most useful animals. The rivers are well stocked with fish.

LAKE BAIKAL.

A YURAK HUNTER.

The mammoth, a large kind of elephant with long hair, was formerly found in Siberia. Its bones are found in large numbers, and are used as ivory.

HISTORY.

At a remote period, the Slavs, especially the people of Novgorod, had commercial dealings with the tribes on the Asiatic slopes of the Ural Mountains. Some traders are known to have descended the tributary rivers of the Obi in search of furs. The principal market was at Isker on the Irtish, a little above the site of the present position of Tobolsk. Isker was the capital of a Tartar kingdom, and known to ancient Arab merchants. A family of wealthy Russian merchants, named Strogonoff, started a trade by barter with the Tartar tribes to the east of the Ural. They obtained from the Czar Ivan a grant of the desert districts of the Kama, great trade privileges, and power to erect fortresses against Siberian robbers, and to levy troops at their own expense. One of the robber chiefs of the Don Cossacks, named Yermak, who had been sentenced to death for pillage, but who had been subsequently pardoned by the Czar, took service with the Strogonoffs. In 1581, at the head of 850 men, he crossed the Urals, terrified the nations by the novelty of fire-arms, and gained several victories. He captured Isker though with the loss of half of the Cossacks who had crossed the Ural, and opened communication with Bokhara. One day in 1584 he was surprised by his enemies, and sank in trying to swim the Irtish from the weight of the breastplate given him by the Czar. His troops were compelled to abandon a conquest which was effected later by Russian troops. Yermak was reckoned a hero by the people, and is reckoned as a saint by the Church. Miracles were said to have taken place at his tomb, and his exploits are commemorated in songs. The Russians called Isker Sibir, and made it the seat of their power. Having been swept away with a flood, Tobolsk was made the centre from which the Russian dominions were extended.

In 1604 the town of Tomsk was founded. Small parties pushed on to Lake Baikal, and thence to the valley of the Lena, everywhere erecting small forts and subduing the native tribes. In 1639, they had reached the Sea of Okhotsk.

About the middle of the 17th century, the Russians were overrunning the districts bordering on the Amur, and building a chain of forts along the river. This aroused the jealousy of the Chinese. War commenced between the two nations in 1680, when the Chinese demolished all the forts on the Amur, and retired to their own country with a number of prisoners. In 1689 peace was concluded at Nertchinsk. The Russians agreed to evacuate the settlements on the Amur, but trade was opened between the two countries. In 1722, from Russian misconduct, the Chinese Emperor expelled all Russians from his dominions and prohibited trade. By the treaty of Kiakhta, concluded in 1728, trade between the Russians and Chinese was allowed at two towns, of which Kiakhta was the principal.

The desire to possess an outlet in the Pacific led the Russians in 1851, in spite of the treaty, to establish trading factories at the mouth of the Amur. During the Crimean war, the northern bank of the Amur was occupied, and in 1860 the Chinese Government made a formal cession of the territory to the Russians.

EUROPEAN POPULATION.

The total population of Siberia is about 46 lakhs, of which the Russians include 38 lakhs, leaving only about 8 lakhs of native tribes. The European population was less than a

million of the beginning of the present century. It has increased through exiles, and, latterly, through free immigration. Some account may be given of the former.

The earliest exiles are said to have been sent by Boris Godunof towards the end of the 16th century. The population was afterwards increased by insubordinate Little Russians and dissenters from the Russian Church. The successors of Peter the Great sent a new class of exiles—political offenders and criminals, many of whom, branded or maimed in tongue, nose or ears, perished miserably in the forests and *tundras* of Siberia.

SIBERIAN MERCHANT IN WINTER DRESS.

Until recent times the political exiles had to make journeys of four or five thousand miles on foot, tied, or chained in gangs to long iron poles. It took them two years to reach places of banishment in the Trans. Baikal province. It was then the custom to guard against the escape of convicts by tearing out their nostrils. Until 1864, they were branded by a hot iron on the forehead and on both cheeks. At present runaways are brought in by the native tribes. They are said to prefer the chase of an escaped convict to that of a wild goat. The latter has only one skin, but the former has three—his shirt, his long coat, and his sheepskin.

Much has been done of late to improve the condition of the exiles, although reforms are still needed in some respects. Many of the convicts lead a fairly comfortable life in Western Siberia. The worst criminals are now sent by steamers from Odessa to the island of Saghalien.

The European population of Siberia stands intellectually higher than that of ordinary Russians. The political exiles are generally intelligent, well educated men. Having no employment to occupy them, some pass their weary days in teaching. The university recently established at Tomsk will also give an impulse to education.

As already mentioned, the European population is now increasing mostly through free settlers. There is plenty of fertile land in the southern districts, and when the country is better opened up by roads and railways, it will be able to sustain a large population. Some of the Russians are traders; others are farmers or breed cattle.

Principal Towns.

Tiumen is north-east from Ekaterinburg, with which it is connected by rail. It is on the Tura river, and was founded in 1586 on the site of an ancient Tartar city. It is the most important commercial centre in Western Siberia. It has water communication with the Obi, through its tributary the Irtish, and it is the limit of caravans from China. There is a large prison for exiles from which they are forwarded.

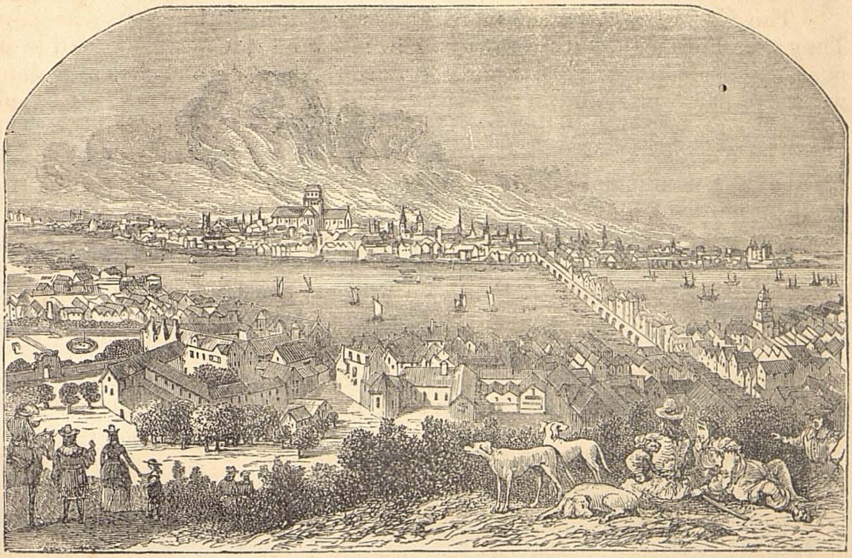
Tobolsk is the capital of the government of Tobolsk, which is half the size of India. It is situated at the junction of the Irtish and Tobol, nearly 2,000 miles east from St. Petersburg.

TOBOLSK.

Steamers run to it from Tiumen in a day and a half. The upper town and the fortress stand on a hill with a precipitous front. From this a good view is obtained, of the lower town, bristling with domes and spires. Tobolsk is well built, with wide and regular streets. The houses are built of wood.

Tomsk, about 800 miles south-east from Tobolsk, is on the Tom, a tributary of the Obi, and was founded in 1604. It may be reached in 8 days by steamer from Tobolsk by first sailing down the Irtish and then ascending the Obi. It is situated on the great trading route between Russia and China. A university was established here in 1888.

Irkutsk, on the Angara, a tributary of the Yenisei, is the capital of Eastern Siberia. It is 40 miles from Lake Baikal. Irkutsk was destroyed by fire in 1879, but it has rapidly recovered. It is the best built town in Siberia with wide streets and handsome public buildings. It is the great highway between China and Russia, especially for the tea trade.



BURNING OF IRKUTSK.

Travellers from Irkutsk to Kiakhta can reach it in 4 days by road and steamer. The road winds along the wooded part of the picturesque Angara valley. On the way a beautiful view is obtained of Lake Baikal.

Kiakhta is 165 miles south-east from Irkutsk. It is on the Russian frontier, and is separated from Maimatchin, a town in Chinese territory, by neutral ground, 200 yards in breadth. It was founded as a fort in 1728. It was appointed by the treaty of Nertchinsk in 1689 as the sole trading place between Russia and China. Though it has declined since the opening of seaports in China, its commerce is still considerable.

Yakutsk, the town of the Yakuts, is north-east, on a branch of the Lena, 4 miles from the main stream. There are a few merchants trading in hides, fur, and mammoth teeth.

The River Amur and Provinces.

The **Amur** (The Great River) is one of the largest rivers of Asia. It rises in Mongolia, and after a winding course of about 2400 miles, falls into the sea opposite the island of Saghalien. The greater portion of it is navigable, although sand and mud render the ascent difficult for

the first 40 miles. There is a large number of steamers on the river. For six months of the year it is frozen.

It has already been described how the Russians obtained it from the Chinese.

Saghalien, or **Sakhalin,** is an island 670 miles in length, and from 20 to 150 in breadth, opposite the mouth of the Amur. It is about the size of Ceylon. Mountains, about 5,000 feet in height, run from end to end. The rainfall is heavy, and mists are very prevalent. It was peopled by a few native tribes before it came under the Russians. Japan claimed the southern part of the island. This was exchanged for the Kurile Islands. Russian convicts are sent here to work coal mines.

Vladivostock (Rule of the East) is a fine harbour near the southern limit of the Russian territory. It is the terminus of the overland telegraph by Kiakhta, and it is proposed to connect it by rail with St. Petersburg.

Sea of Okhotsk and Kamtchatka.

The Sea of Okhotsk is a large inlet of the Pacific, on the east coast of Siberia, nearly enclosed by Kamtchatka, the Kuriles, and Saghalien. It is cold and little navigated. On its northern shore is the small seaport of Okhotsk, with a population of about 300.

Kamtchatka, from a word meaning to terminate, is a peninsula in Eastern Siberia. It stretches south into the Pacific to the east of the Sea of Okhotsk. A chain of volcanic mountains, with peaks 15,000 feet in height, runs down the centre. Some of the volcanoes are constantly active. Hot springs abound. The climate is moist; the vegetation is therefore luxuriant. The native inhabitants form two distinct races.

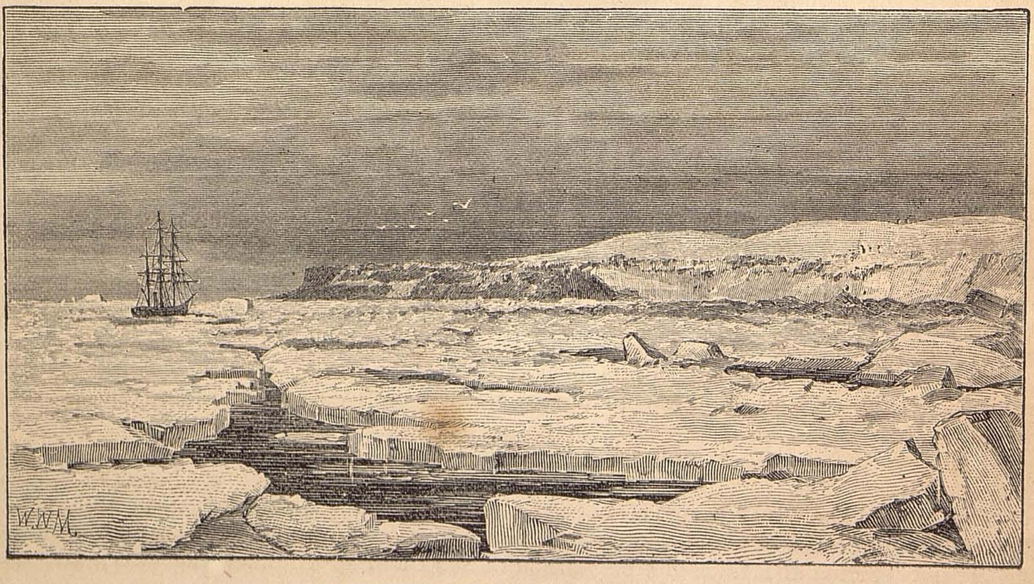
The *Kamtchatkdals,* the more numerous, inhabit the southern portion of the peninsula. They are short men, with a tawny skin, black hair, a meagre beard, a broad face, a short flat nose, small deep-set eyes, scanty eyebrows, large stomachs, and thin legs. They live in winter in earth pits, and in summer in light tents. They are settled chiefly near the mouth of small rivers, and are engaged in fishing, catching wild animals, and farming.

The *Koriaks,* the other race, are wild, shunning civilisation, and inhabiting the northern parts of the peninsula. They wander about from place to place, depending for subsistence on their herds of reindeer.

The peninsula was not discovered by the Russians until the close of the 17th century, when it was easily annexed. There is a small seaport, with a fine harbour, called *Petropaulovski* (St. Peter and St. Paul), on the east coast.

The Northern Shores of Siberia.

It has already been mentioned that Siberia is bounded on the north by the Arctic or Northern Ocean. The land is covered nearly the whole year with snow and ice. Only for



A SHIP ENCLOSED IN ICE IN THE ARCTIC OCEAN.

a few weeks the snow melts, and the ground is covered with moss. The ground is frozen all the year round a few feet below the surface.

Many European geographical discoveries were made in attempts to reach India and China by sea. Columbus sought to gain this object by sailing westward, and discovered America. Others tried it by sailing north-eastward. Among such was Sir Hugh Willoughby, who perished in 1554. The Russians skirted the shores of the Arctic Ocean from Nova Zembla to Behring Strait. In 1742 Lieutenant Chelyuskin reached the most northerly point of Asia, which is now generally called after his name. The Russians, however, failed to carry out fully the wishes of Peter the Great, that the northern coast of Siberia should be explored by sea. The ocean is nearly always covered with thick ice, with only a few occasional openings. Ships are very apt to be crushed by masses of ice. The picture will give an idea of the difficulties of the undertaking.

NORDENSKIÖLD.

The first navigator to sail completely round the north coast of Asia was Nordenskiöld, born at Helsingfers in Finland in 1832, but who adopted Sweden as his country in 1857. During the next twenty years he often visited Spitzbergen. He made two voyages, showing the practicability of establishing a regular trade between Europe and the great Siberian rivers, Obi and Yenisei.

In 1878 Nordenskiöld formed the project of sailing round to Behring Strait. The expedition was estimated to cost a sum equal to about 2 lakhs of rupees. A single wealthy merchant, Mr. Oscar Dickson, gave Rs. 1,20,000. The vessel, called the Vega, sailed on the 4th July, 1878. When the passage was nearly made, the ship was beset with ice, and frozen in for ten months. On the 18th July, 1879, it was released, and steamed for the entrance to Behring Strait. On the 20th July, the Vega was opposite East Cape, and, after exploring the coast, reached Japan on the 2nd September.

NATIVE RACES.

A few of the principal Native Races will now be described.

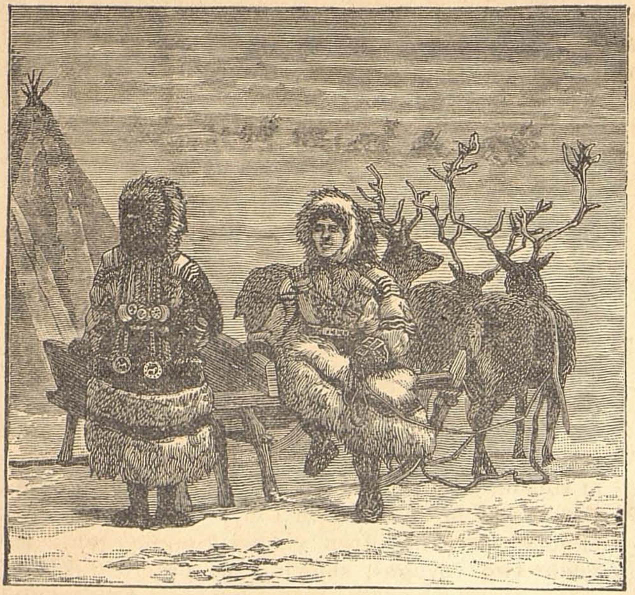
The Samoyedes.

SAMOYEDES.

The word Samoyedes is said to mean "eaters of salmon," a kind of fish. They inhabit the shores of the Arctic Ocean, from Archangel as far as the Lena in Eastern Siberia.

The Samoyedes have broad, round, flat faces, thick lips, open nose, very little beard, and long coarse black hair. Through very small in stature, they are stoutly built and very muscular. The men dress like their neighbours. The women join furs and skins of different colours together. They are very vain of their personal appearance, particularly of their hair, which they plait into a tail which hangs down their backs, with pieces of metal that jingle when they move. The tail of a beast also hangs from the back of their dress.

A traveller went with a Samoyede family for a little while. They were drawn by reindeer in sledges, and other reindeer followed of their own accord. When they stopped for the night, they



SAMOYEDES SLEDGE.

pitched the tent, covering the long poles with their reindeer skins, sewed together. The snow covered the ground inside the tent. It was easy to get water to fill the kettle, as a few lumps of snow soon melted. Some of the men slept by the blazing fire, while

A YURAK SAMOYEDE.

OSTIAK WOMEN.

others went out, armed with long poles, to defend the deer from wolves. There was in the party a child 2 years old. The traveller offered him white sugar; but at first he called it snow, and threw it away. Soon, however, he learned to like it, and asked for some whenever he saw the stranger at tea. At night the child was laid in a long basket, and was closely covered with furs; in the same basket he also travelled in the sledge.

One day, the traveller saw a Samoyede feast. A reindeer was brought and killed before the tent-door. Its bleeding body was taken into the tent and devoured, all raw as it was. It was dreadful to see the Samoyedes gnawing the flesh off the bones; their faces all stained with blood. Even the child had his share of the raw meat.

The Samoyedes are very fond of vodka, and would exchange for it every thing they have. Its sale has been forbidden by the Russian Government, but it is smuggled in by traders.

The Samoyedes are numerous, and divided into various tribes.

OSTIAKS.

The OSTIAKS inhabit the valley of the river Obi, and extend eastward as far as the Yenisei.

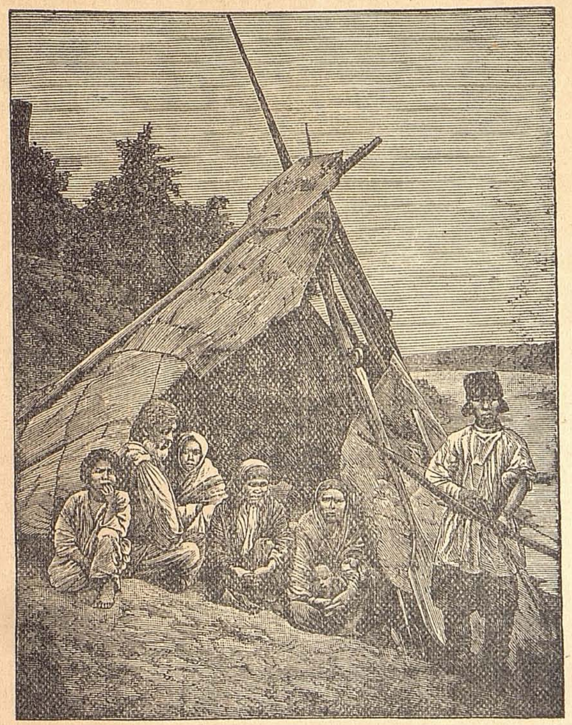
They are short in stature, with flat faces and reddish hair. They smear their bodies with fat, over which thy wear a reindeer cloak. A short pair of trousers is also worn, with boots of reindeer skin, made to fit tightly by means of a strap. Both married and single women wear the veil, a head dress shaped somewhat like a cross.

Flesh and fish, often in a half-cooked or raw state, are their favourite food.

The Ostiaks generally live in tents, divided into stalls like those of a stable. Each person sits and sleeps in his own stall on his deerskin, except when the family gather around the fire, sitting on low stools, warming themselves, and talking together. They are so filthy that the stench is abominable.

The Ostiaks live by hunting and fishing, in which they are skilful. Bows and arrows are their chief weapons. The bow is 6 feet in length, taller than its owner. The arrows are 4 feet in length, tipped with a ball or an iron spike. The ball is used to kill small animals without injury to their skins.

The black bear, the most powerful animal known to the Ostiaks, is regarded as a type of their god. In a court of justice, when swearing on the head of a bear, the Ostiaks imitate the motion of eating, implying thereby a wish that the animal may devour them in like manner, if they do not tell the truth.



OSTIAK TENT.

The Buriats.

The Buriats are a Mongolian race, scattered about Lake Baikal. They resemble the Chinese in appearance, having square faces, projecting cheek-bones, almond-shaped eyes, a flat nose, and black hair. The men let their hair grow long on the crown of the head, plaiting it into a queue, or tail, that hangs down the back. The rest of the hair is cut short—not shaved, the use of the razor being limited to the priesthood.

The women of the richer Buriats dress their hair with great taste, forming it into two thick braids, which fall from the temples below the shoulders. Round the forehead is bound a fillet, studded with beads of mother of pearl. The unmarried girls interweave their braids with strings of coral.* The women have often silver ornaments hanging on their breast.

BURIAT MAN.

* By mistake at page 5, a Buriat young lady is represented as a Russian girl.

Many of the Buriats live in houses, but most prefer tents formed of a light frame-work, covered with coarse woollen cloth, with a hole in the centre for the escape of smoke. Although these huts are about 16 feet in diameter, they are nowhere sufficiently high to allow a full grown man to stand upright. Even when living in houses, the Buriats sometimes make a hole in the roof, and have the fire in the centre of the floor.

A BURIAT WOMAN.

The furniture is limited to mats and cushions for sleeping on, a few pots for boiling food, some rude jugs and basins, together with jars for water.

Boiled mutton is the chief food of the Buriats. When the sheep has been killed and skinned, it is put into the pot. When cooked, it is taken out, all dripping and steaming. Each man takes a large lump, and then cuts off little pieces which he tosses into his mouth. After the meat is devoured, the broth is drunk. The Buriats are very fond of brick tea, boiled with water containing rye meal, mutton fat, and salt.

Four kinds of dried dung are used in cooking. That of sheep and goats gives the most heat; camel's dung comes next; then that of cattle, and lastly that of horse's which is soon consumed, but is useful in lighting a fire.

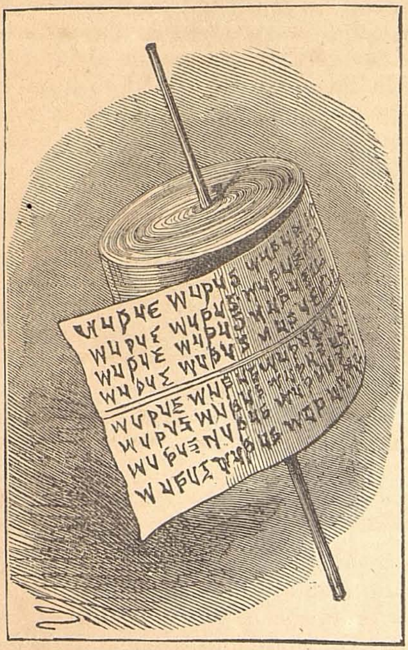
The ordinary occupation of the Buriats is tending sheep, cattle, and horses, of which a few have great numbers. Some of them are skilful silversmiths.

The religion of the Buriats is of three kinds:—Shamanism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Shamanism is their old religion, but by far the greater number are Buddhists.

The Buriats got their religion from Tibet, where the Grand Lama, or Dalai Lama (Ocean

BURIAT LAMAS AND MONGOLIAN INTERPRETER.

Lama) at Lhassa, the capital, is supposed to be a kind of living Buddha. When he dies, it is supposed that his soul only transmigrates into another body, which is discovered by the priests, who are called lamas. The priests are treated with great respect, and every Buddhist Buriat desires a member of his family to become one. The lamas compose about a sixth of the population. When in full dress, they are clothed in scarlet, and their heads are shaved all over. They are supposed to be strictly chaste, but many of them have families. The use of spirits and tobacco is also forbidden.



ROLL OF PRAYERS.

Their first command is not to take animal life. Hence they cannot kill the vermin with which they are infested. When they can no longer bear the infliction, they call a layman, and get him to examine their person and dress.

The lamas live together in monasteries or lamaseries. Each contains a praying machine. It is an upright cylinder about 3 feet high and 2 feet in diameter. Inside it contains several thousand prayers. It may be turned round by hand, or by wind, or water power.

Some thousands of the Buriats profess Christianity, and the Bible has been translated into their language.

YAKUTS.

The YAKUTS occupy the valley of the Lena, in the centre of the Yakutsk Province. They are of middle height, of a light copper colour, with black hair which the men cut close. They are considered to belong to the Turkish family. Their speech is said to be intelligible at Constantinople.

The dress of the Yakuts resembles that of the other nations of Siberia, except, perhaps, that they are fonder of ornaments.

Horse-flesh is the favourite food of the Yakuts. Their saying is that to eat much flesh and to grow fat on it, is the highest happiness of man. They are the greatest gluttons. It is said that four Yakuts would eat a horse. They rarely kill their oxen for food. At a wedding, the favourite dish served up by the bride to her future lord, is a boiled horse's head, with horse-flesh sausages. If during a journey a horse becomes injured, it is killed and eaten, the men taking off their girdles that their stomachs may swell out. Milk, whether from cows or mares, is in general request. An intoxicating liquor is made from fermented milk, which the men drink in large quantities ; the women comfort themselves by smoking tobacco.

The Yakuts are nominal Christians. When the Russians conquered Siberia the Yakuts were given to idolatry of the worst form, mingled with gross superstition. On the death of a great man, it was the custom to bury alive with him his oldest servants and favourites. One day an imperial ukase was issued admitting the Yakuts into the Russian Church. The whole race then adopted the new faith. Amongst the outlying portion of the nation, a lingering belief in Shamanism still survives. The traveller will observe locks of horse hair attached to the branches of trees to appease evil spirits.

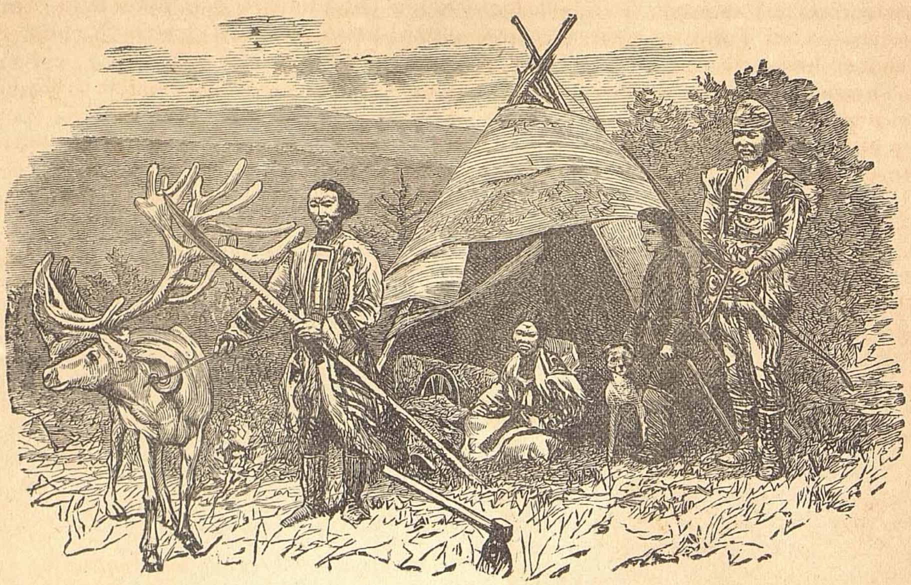
Such of the Yakuts as live near the Frozen Ocean have neither horses nor cattle ; but keep large numbers of dogs, which drag them to and fro on their fishing excursions.

TUNGUSIANS.

The TUNGUSIANS wander over the mountainous region between Lake Baikal and the Sea of Okhotsk. Those in Siberia are known to the Russians as the Dog, Horse, or Reindeer Tungusians, according to the animals they employ.

The Tungusians are of middle size. Their eyes, almond shaped and set far apart, show their Mongolian origin ; but their noses are well-formed, and their faces are not so flat as those of the Mongols. They are very filthy, eating and drinking anything, however loathsome, and their bodies have a disagreeable smell.

The dress consists of a reindeer cloak, with short trousers, and boots. The head is



REINDEER TUNGUSES WITH BIRCH-BARK TENT.

generally uncovered, but a fur hood is slung around the neck ready for use. The hair is cut short, except a long lock on each side, of which the young men are very proud.

A TUNGUSIAN.

Their tents consist of a few poles stuck in the ground or snow, and fastened together at the top in the form of a cone. This framework is covered with reindeer skins, in which a small gap is left to obtain an entrance. A fire burns in the centre, the smoke of which finds its way out as fast it can. Bear and reindeer skins form their beds, with a blanket made from the same animals in the shape of a sack, into which the sleeper thrusts the lower part of his body.

The Tungusians are so fond of change that they rarely encamp two nights on the same spot. From the nature of their dwellings, a very short time suffices to pack them upon the backs of their reindeer.

The Tungusians are very honest. Robbery is regarded by them as an unpardonable sin, and one of their number convicted of this crime is branded by its stigma through life.

They are very improvident. They wil consume nearly a week's provision in one night, and go hungry the remaining six days.

As long as the provisions last, the Tungusian never does anything but eat, smoke, and sleep. Should he kill nothing, he comes home without saying a word, sits down by the fire, lights his pipe, and then tightening his girdle, goes to sleep. The wife and family do the same, and all go

supperless to bed. Fastening the belt tight round the stomach is supposed to prevent their feeling hunger. A Tunguse gives the first animal he kills in the day to the first person he meets, because he attributes his success to that person's luck.

The Tungusians possess large herds of reindeer, which they use both as draught animals and for riding purposes.

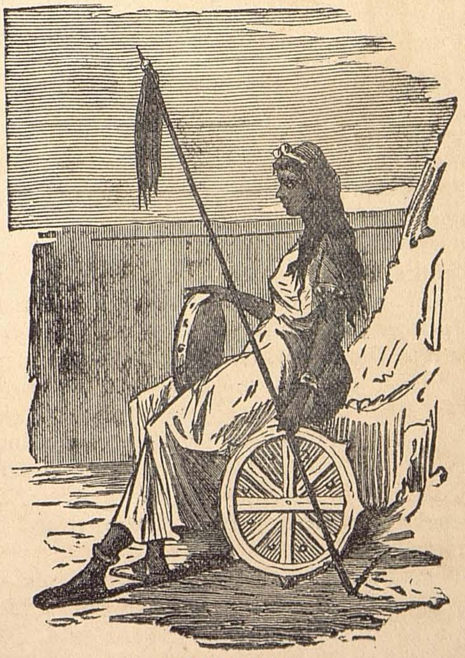
They are a gay light-hearted people, very fond of a joke. They play at cards, showing great interest in the game, but they never gamble.

Shamanism.

The Shamans of Siberia are somewhat like the devil dancers of South India and Ceylon. The same belief in evil spirits is found throughout the whole of Eastern Asia.

TUNGUSIAN SHAMAN.

When a man falls sick, he is supposed to be attacked by a demon, and the Shaman is called to drive him out. There is a distinct spirit for every disease who must be propitiated in a particular manner. The Shaman puts on a large bearskin cloak, which jingles with bells, pieces of iron, brass, or anything which will help, when shaken, to make a noise; the whole sometimes weighing as much as 50 seers. He begins by singing in a monotonous murmur, and drinking brandy. Both patient and doctor are usually decorated with strips of wood or shavings, hanging round the waist and head. By the side of the patient are placed idols and brandy. The Shaman sits on one side, and the audience on the other. He approaches, drinks more brandy, begins to sing, and jingle his bells, and gives brandy to the spectators. On the table are placed idols, fish, a squirrel's skin, millet and brandy, and a dog is tied under the table. The eatables are offered to the idols, and then distributed to be consumed by all present. Meanwhile the Shaman twists his body, and dances like one possessed, and howls to such an extent that Chinese merchants, who have come out of curiosity, have been known to flee in terror. He also beats a small drum with jingling bells, and sometimes falls prostrate as if in communion with the spirits. This kind of thing sometimes goes on for 3 or 4 nights, as long, probably, as provisions and brandy hold out, after which the patient is left to believe that he will get well. The Shaman receives his fee, which may be a reindeer, a dog, fish, brandy, or whatever the patient can afford. The Shamans possess



SHAMANIN.

great power over the deluded people. A Shaman who has performed wonderful cures receives after death a magnificent tomb to his memory.

There are also women called Shamanins.

In some cases, the Shamans make the people believe that the sickness is caused by demons entering the body as stones or thorns. The Shamans pretend to take them out, and so cure the disease. They hide them in their dress beforehand, and after certain ceremonies pretend to suck them out, showing them as proofs of what they say. As they are paid so much for each, they sometimes claim to have brought half a dozen out of a man's stomach.

THE GILYAKS.

The Gilyaks are a wandering tribe, inhabiting the lower course of the Amur, and the northern half of the island of Saghalien. Their features are Mongolian, but the cheek bones protrude so much as to hide the remainder of the face when viewed sideways. They tie up their hair in a thick tail, but do not cut it. Hence they are called by the Chinese "long hairs."

GILYAK.

The men and women dress very much alike. The summer hat is made of bark, ornamented by strips of coloured wood, sewn in patterns. A loose cloak is confined round the waist by a belt, to which is suspended a number of articles; as a large knife, a Chinese pipe, a tobacco pouch, &c. A number of small pieces of metal round the bottom of the coat, marks the woman.

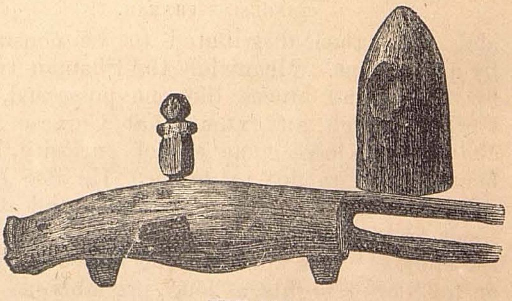
The Gilyaks subsist almost entirely on fish. Occasionally they eat animals taken in the chase, and their dogs when they die. Pork and other flesh, with a little millet, are reserved for festivals.

They are skilful in making light canoes, with curious elevated prows, the extremities of which are quaintly carved. In the management of the canoes the hard work falls upon the women. The men sit at the stern guiding the canoe, smoking at the same time their long pipes. The women have short curved paddles, which they dip first in the one side, and then in the other.

When a woman is about to give birth to a child, she is put out of the house and the village until the infant is born, and a certain time has elapsed. Even winter, when the ground is covered with snow makes no change in this respect. Any one who gave her shelter or help, would be regarded almost as committing a crime. On the other hand, they are kind to their dogs in like circumstances. Many of the children die. Babies are put in wooden cradles, and suspended from the roof. They are strapped up, so as to be unable to move hand or foot.

The Gilyaks have many superstitions. They do not allow fire to be carried in or out of a house, not even in a pipe, fearing such an act will bring ill luck in hunting or fishing. If a person falls into the water, they will not help him out.

When a Gilyak dies, his remains are buried, and a small wooden house is erected over the grave. As they believe that the soul after death takes up its abode in the body of a favourite dog, that animal is sacrificed at the grave of its late master, after having been fattened up for the occasion.



FISH GOD.

The Gilyaks believe in wooden idols or charms for the cure of disease. Sometimes they wear amulets shaped like other part afflicted. A lame man carries a small leg of wood, an arm, a hand. The picture above is a fish-god, rudely shaped like a sturgeon, with a little god seated on his back.

The Goldi.

The Goldi are a tribe, somewhat like the Gilyaks, inhabiting the Amur, but higher up the river. They are small in size, being usually below rather than above five feet. Their faces are flat and square, their eyes almond-shaped. The hair is shaved or cut. The diseases common among them are rheumatism and sore-eyes, produced by hunting in the snow.

The favourite winter dress is made of dogs' skins or of fox or wolf as being the next warmest. In summer they wear fish skin. Hence the Chinese call them "fish-skin strangers." The fish-skin is prepared from two kinds of salmon. They strip it off very cleverly, and, by beating with a mallet, remove the scales, and so render it supple. Clothes thus made are waterproof. The richer Goldi get from the merchants cotton goods, and sometimes even silk.

GOLDI IN WINTER DRESS.

The Goldi have a great respect for cats. They were formerly very dear. A cat good at catching mice sometimes sold for a hundred rupees. The prices have gone down since the Russians introduced them. The Goldi kept a kind of owl to catch rats.

In winter they travel by means of their dogs. Any number, from 7 to 17, may be harnessed

to a sledge. An ordinary dog is worth 4 or 5 rupees; a good leader costs 25 rupees. A team of 9 dogs draws a man and 100 seers of baggage a day, each dog receiving a piece of fish a foot long, and about 2 inches square, the same in size as suffices for his master.

RUSSIAN CENTRAL ASIA.

Russian Central Asia is a vast region, occupying 1½ millions of square miles, or as large as India; but the population is less than 6 millions. Formerly known as *Independent Tartary*, the whole of it is now under Russian control.

Typo. Etching Co. Sc.

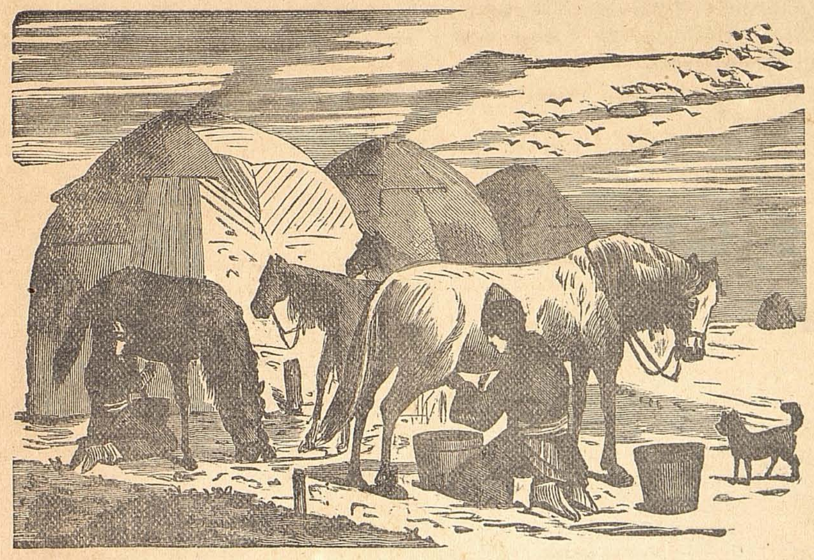
The boundaries are, on the west, the Caspian Sea and the river Ural; on the north the Ural and Irtish rivers; on the east Mongolia and Eastern Turkestan; and on the south, Persia and Afghanistan. The principal divisions are the Kirghiz Steppe, on the north; the Trans-caspian Territory, east of the Caspian; and Turkestan, in the south-east.

Kirghiz Steppe.

The Kirghiz Steppe forms a vast stony plain, almost everywhere wanting in water, with many salt lakes, but with a few fertile patches of land. In summer, the soil is baked with burning heat; the air is parched, and musquitoes swarm; rivers and lakes almost disappear, and water is very scarce. In winter the air is excessively cold, and strong winds drive the snow in clouds that frequently overwhelm numbers of horses and sheep and their owners. The Kirghiz, a wandering tribe belonging to the Turkish race, consider the whole country common property, each family occupying as much of it as his flocks and herds require.

The *Kirghiz* are below the middle height. They have scarcely any bridge to their nose; the space between their eyes is flat, and quite on a level with the rest of their face. Their eyes are long and half closed; the forehead projects at the lower part, and retreats at the top. Their cheeks are big and puffy. They have but little beard.

The dress of the men consists of one or more sheepskin coats, wide trousers, leather boots and girdle, a conical felt hat in summer, or a furred cap in winter. The dress of the women is nearly the same as that of the men. Their hair hangs down their backs in two or three



MILKING MARES.

long curls, their heads and necks are covered with loosely folded cotton veils. Both men and women wear girdles, which they adorn with silver, gold, and precious stones. The boys wear little clothing on their bodies, and no covering on their shaven heads. The girls dress like their mothers, with their hair cut short behind, and hanging down in numerous braids in front.

Their dwellings are of two kinds. They have tents, made of poles, gathered together at the top, covered in winter with coarse cloth, and buried several feet in the snow. In summer they are thatched with grass as a protection against the sun. Underground houses, reached by an inclined plane, are also favourite habitations.

Mutton, horse flesh, tea, and koumiss, form the chief articles of food. They are fond of strong drink.

Racing in summer, the recital of tales and singing of songs to a reed pipe and rude kind of fiddle, are the popular amusements. Few can read, and scarcely any can write.

The Kirghiz are greatly given to kidnapping children for sale as slaves. Sometimes, on the death of a father, the eldest son gets rid in this way of his sisters whom he would otherwise have to support.

It is difficult to say whether the Kirghiz are Muhammadans or heathens. Some acknowledge one Supreme Being to whom they offer prayers according to the Koran. Others believe in two divinities, one kind, the other hostile to man. All are extremely superstitious, and believe in the existence of good and bad spirits, in magicians and soothsayers, in lucky and unlucky days.

The wealth of the Kirghiz is made up of horses, sheep, goats, and camels. The horses are small, but strong. They are used for riding, and the mares yield milk. The sheep are large, covered with long coarse wool, and with very large tails. Every thing is priced at so many sheep. It is said that the sheep will not move from pasture to pasture except when guided by the goats. The goats have under their long hair, a soft hair which is valuable. The camels, mostly two-humped, are used for carrying burdens.

Trans-Caspian Territory.

The Trans-Caspian Territory, to the East of the Caspian Sea, is larger than the Lower Provinces of India, but the population is only about 3 lakhs.

The inhabitants are chiefly Turkomans,

A TURKOMAN.

who are also found in Turkestan. They are divided into numerous tribes. The majority have the wide flat face, small oblique eyes, small nose, large lips, outstanding ears, and thick short black hair of the Mongolians.

Nearly the entire capital of a Turkoman family is invested in jewels and ornaments for the women, who do all the hard work.

Pilau is the favourite food. It is usually served up in a huge dish laid on the floor. An English traveller thus describes a meal with Turkomans:

"The entire company sat round, and each fished out a handful. Contrary to ordinary Mussulman habits, there was no preparatory washing of hands. Each person boldly grasped a handful of rice, squeezed it into a ball in the palm of his hand, and then clapped it into his mouth. Our host, from time to time, scraped pieces of mutton off the bones with his dirty thumb-nail, and threw them into my plate, expressing his wonder at my small appetite. After dinner, there was no more washing than before it. The guests stuck their fingers one after another into their mouths, thus removing the excess of rice and grease adhering to them. The meal concluded, tea was served again. It was drunk in prodigious quantities, very weak, over-sweetened, and without milk. My host noticing that half a dozen flies were swimming in my tea, plunged two of his great unwashed fingers up to the knuckles into my glass to fish out the intruders."

TURKOMAN GIRL.

Marriages are arranged by the young people themselves, who inform their parents when they have become attached. Female go-betweens are then employed to arrange the affair and discuss the marriage portion. The future bridegroom has to present a complete set of ornaments to the bride. The betrothal

TURKOMAN SLAVE RAIDERS.

festivities last several days, with music, dancing, and horse-racing. The women gather together in groups, laughing, talking, joking and shrieking, while musicians play and sing, and children shout and yell. These noises are mingled with the bleating of sheep, barking of dogs, neighing of horses, and braying of donkeys.

The birth of children, especially boys, is celebrated by much feasting and amusement. During early years they are carefully guarded against evil spirits by charms of various kinds hung round the head. Girls are early taught to be useful in the household. Boys take to horseback at five, and are skilled horsemen at ten.

The Turkomans can scarcely be said to have a government. "We are a people without a head," is their boast. "We are all equal; with us every one is a king." The ruler that tyrannises over them, as it does in India, is "custom."

They were formerly a nation of robbers. Some English travellers once met 5 men chained together, walking with sad steps in the deep sands of the desert. They were Persians, just caught by the Turkomans, and on their way to Bokhara. When they saw the Englishmen, the Persians begun to cry. A few weeks before, when working in their fields, they were seized and carried off. They were hungry and thirsty; for the Turkomans cruelly starve their slaves, in order that they may be too weak to run away.

The Turkomans made slaves of other nations, because they said it was their custom. This custom, under Russian rule, they have been compelled to give up. The most powerful tribe is called the Tekke. Their chief stronghold, Geok Tepe, was taken by General Skobelef, after a long siege in which they suffered severely.

TURKESTAN.

Turkestan, "the country of the Turks," includes the provinces directly under Russia, and the two Khanates of Bokhara and Khiva, which are Russian dependencies.

Russian Turkestan.

The eastern portion once formed the Khanate of Khokand, the native country of Baber, who founded the Mogul Empire in India. It was completely incorporated in the Russian General Government in 1875, and is now called Ferghana.

Khokand, the capital of the district, lies in a beautiful valley, south of the Syr. The population is about 54,000.

Tashkend, to the north-west, on a northern tributary of the Syr, is the largest town in Russian Turkestan, and the residence of the Governor-General. It is situated on a fertile plain, and is surrounded by a wall of sun-dried bricks, 12 miles in circuit. It is the great trading town of the region, and the centre of several caravan routes. The population is about 120,000.

KHOKAND WOMAN.

Samarkand, south-west near the river Zarafshan, was an ancient city, taken and destroyed by Alexander the Great. It was again captured by the Arabs in 712 A. D., who have ever since regarded it as a sacred city. In 1219 it was taken by Genghis Khan, who destroyed three-fourths of its half

UZBEA TARTER.

a million of inhabitants. Timur made it his capital in 1369. He conquered all the states of Northern India, and returned to Samarkand with an immense amount of booty. His tomb still remains, and the large stone on which he sat while administering justice. The Madrasas, or Muhammadan Colleges, are some of the finest buildings in the city. It fell into the hands of the Amirs of Bokhara, from whom it was taken by the Russians in 1868. Since 1888, it has been connected by rail with the Caspian Sea. The population is about 33,000.

Merv, south-west of Samarkand, is situated in the fertile valley of the Murghab. It is very ancient, being mentioned in the Parsi Zendavesta. Under the Seljuk Turks it was a splendid city. It began to fall into ruin after being taken and plundered by the Mongols in 1221. It was taken by the Turkomans in 1856, but in 1883 they submitted to the Russians, who built the railway from the Caspian which passes through the district.

Bokhara.

Bokhara is bounded on the south by Afghanistan, and on other sides by Russian Turkestan. A great part of the country consists of dry hard clay, interspersed with low sand hills. Cultivation is possible only near the rivers. The climate is healthy, but subject to great extremes of heat and cold. Sheep, goats, camels, horses, and asses, form the chief wealth of the country. The population consist mostly of Uzbegs, Turkomans, and the aboriginal Tajiks of Persia.

THE AMIR OR KHAN OF BOKHARA.

Bokhara was conquered in the beginning of the 8th century by the Arabs, who were dispossessed of it in 1232 by Genghis Khan. In 1403 it fell into the hands of Timur, and in 1505 it was taken by the Uzbegs, its present masters. The rulers were noted for their vice and fanaticism. In 1866 the Khan proclaimed a holy war against the Russians, who thereupon invaded his dominions, and forced him to sign a treaty ceding the territory now forming the Russian district of Syr Daria, to consent to pay a war indemnity, and to permit Russian trade. In 1873 a second treaty was signed, forbidding any foreigner to enter the country without a Russian passport, and the state became practically a Russian dependency. The area is about 92,000 square miles, rather larger than the North-West Provinces; but the population is only about 2½ millions.

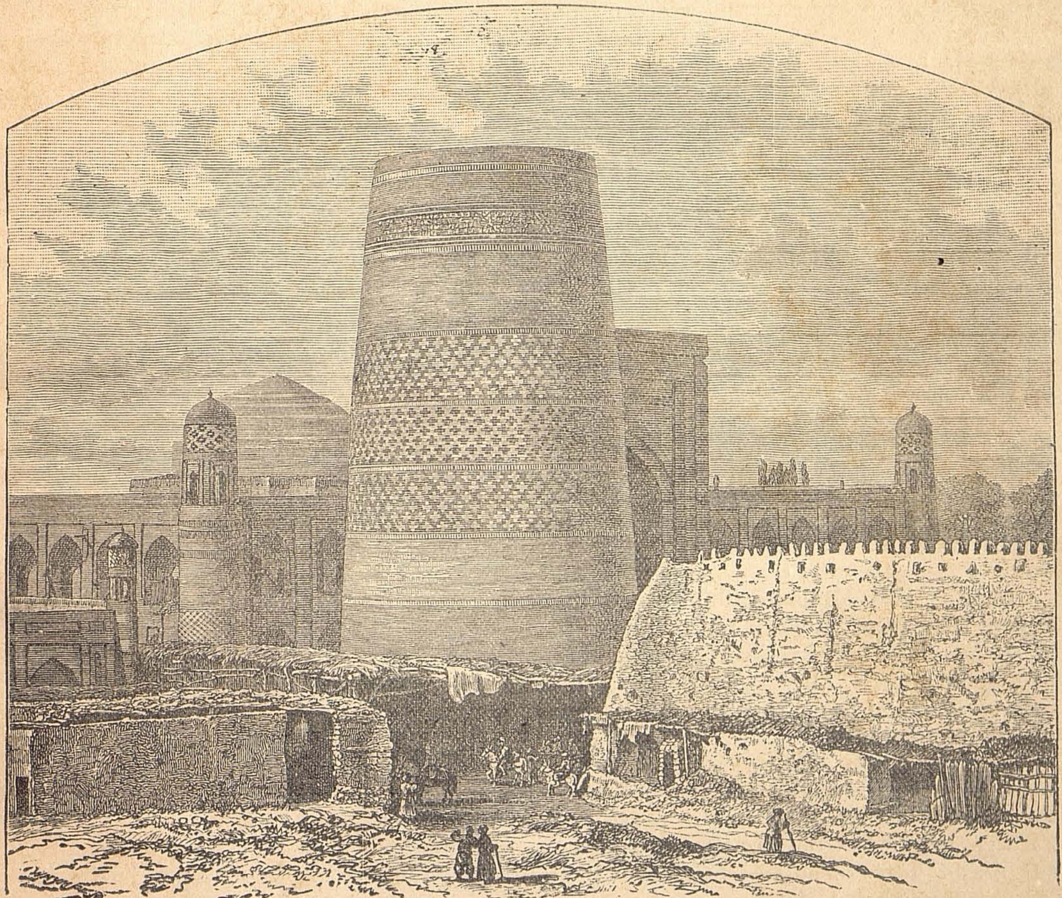
Bokhara, the capital, is situated on a plain, a few miles from the Zarafshan. It is about 9 miles in circumference, and is surrounded by mud-walls, 24 feet in height. The houses are small, and built of sun-dried bricks on a wooden framework. The streets are very narrow, the widest barely sufficing for the passage of a loaded camel. The mosques are fabulously said to be 365 in number. Attached to one of them is a tower, about 200 feet high, built by Timur, from which criminals were hurled.

Bokhara is especially noted for its Muhammadan Colleges, to which pupils came from India and other countries. The teaching has a similar effect to that which was given in the Calcutta Madrasa: "It produces an intolerant contempt for any thing they have not learned. They know as an absolute truth that Arabic grammar, law, rhetoric, and logic, comprise all that is worth knowing upon earth."

The population of Bokhara is about 70,000. The city now forms a station on the Trans-Caspian Railway.

KHIVA.

The Khanate of KHIVA is bounded on the north by the Sea of Aral; on the east by the Oxus; on the south and west by Russian territory. The area is about 22,000 square miles—about equal to Oudh. The population is estimated at 7 lakhs, of whom about 4 lakhs are wandering Turkomans.



THE GREAT MINARET OF KHIVA.

The country is mostly a sandy desert, with some fertile tracts scattered over it. Cotton is the chief production.

Khiva is an Uzbeg State, founded like that of Bokhara, on the ruins of Timur's Central Asian Empire. In 1872, under the pretext that the Khivans had aided the rebellious Kirghiz, the Russians, divided into 5 columns, each about 3000 strong, entered Khiva. The Khan agreed to cede his possessions on the east of the Oxus, and to pay a war indemnity of 20 lakhs.

Khiva, the capital, consists chiefly of mud huts. Three mosques are the principal brick buildings. The city was long notorious as a great slave market.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

The dominions of the Czar of Russia in Europe and Asia have been briefly described. The two chief impressions left upon the mind, are the vast extent of his territories and the despotic character of his rule.

The Russian people themselves have some excellent qualities; but they have suffered greatly from the serfdom in which they were kept, which developed the vices of slaves. They have also a fatal inclination to strong drink. The educational advantages of the country have been very limited; the Christianity taught is mingled with many superstitions. As in India, the great ambition of the educated is to obtain government office. The salaries being insufficient, bribery and corruption are almost universal.

It has been stated that no nation has any desire to attack Russia, yet an immense army is maintained, impoverishing the country by robbing the fields and workshops of 8½ lakhs of men in the prime of life. Nor is this the only evil. Other nations are obliged, in self-defence, to maintain large armies. The Government of India has been forced to spend crores of rupees to protect the western frontier from Russian invasion.

In private, the present Emperor is said to show a kindly disposition; he has also, thus far, sought to maintain peace in Europe; but his cruel treatment of the Jews and his faithful subjects who only desire liberty of conscience, has made him reprobated by the civilised world. In his religious bigotry, he has copied heathenism, and not Christianity. He has shown the intolerance of a Hindu, and not the freedom of conscience enjoined by the Bible.

The Russians, as has been mentioned, are partly European, partly Asiatic in character. The joint family system prevailed among them as in India and the woes of the poor daughter-in-law form the theme of many a song. It is gradually breaking up in Russia as it will do in India. It has its advantages, but they are more than counterbalanced by its attendant evils.

Before the time of Peter the Great, the Russians were entirely ignorant of the rest of Europe. Although occupying the lowest scale in civilization, they were full of self-conceit, and, like the Hindus, regarded foreigners as Mlechhas, whose touch was pollution. Macaulay describes how Peter the Great brought about a change:

"Not by flattering national prejudices; not by feeding the mind of the young Muscovite with the old woman's stories which his rude fathers had believed; not by filling his head with lying legends;...not by calling him 'a learned native' when he has mastered all these points of knowledge; but by teaching him those foreign languages in which the greatest mass of information has been laid up, and thus putting all that information within his reach. The languages of Western Europe civilised Russian. I cannot doubt that they will do for the Hindu what they have done for the Tartar."

Hindus and Muhammadans in India will derive far more benefit from the study of English than from Sanskrit or Arabic.

It has been shown that the emancipation of the serfs, for the present, has done more harm than good. They were formerly obliged to work; when their own masters they are inclined to spend their time in idleness and to give way to drink. Liberty, to be a blessing, must be rightly used.

It is cheerfully acknowledged that, in Asia, Russian rule has been a great blessing. Wild tribes, formerly always at war with one another, cruel treacherous and remorseless slave-dealers, have been compelled to live in peace and give up man-stealing. The great Trans-Caspian Railway, which is to be continued across the continent till it reaches Vladivostock, is one of the greatest feats of modern engineering, and reflects the greatest credit upon its constructor, General Annenkof. Enormous difficulties had to be met from shifting sands, want of water, burning heat, and intense cold. The railway is acting the part of a great civiliser.

The present reign of despotism will not always continue. Russia will eventually have a more enlightened rule, and her people will gradually enjoy the prosperity which the great natural resources of their country would yield, if rightly improved.

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